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**Violent frontier architecture and artistic re-appropriation of borders:
the production of space in Palestine and Western Sahara**

Olga Blázquez Sánchez

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Director y tutor: Ignacio Gutiérrez de Terán Gómez-Benita

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FE DE ERRATAS / ERRATA SHEET

Violent frontier architecture and artistic re-appropriation of borders: the production of apace
in Palestine and Western Sahara

Tesis Doctoral / PhD Thesis

Olga Blázquez Sánchez

Página / Page	Párrafo / Paragraph	Línea / Line	Donde dice / Where it is said	Debe decir / It should have been said
7	3	2	Or, again in 's words	Or, again in Morey's words
9	6	3	has not not only	has not only
18	1	1	that happen here However	that happen here . However
24	6	1	This PhD Thesis dos not	This PhD Thesis does not
25	3	4	Je monde	le monde
44	5	6	(Lefebvre 1991, 86-87)	(Lefebvre 1991, 86-87).
62	3	4	hers still <i>ibid.</i> , 42).	(<i>ibid.</i> , 42).
75	1	1	desable	de sable
76 (nota al pie número 6)		1	used	use
77	8	6	sources	resources
79	2	1	Saddiki	Saddiki's
85	1	3	their existence."	their existence"
89	1	2	Mur politique10	Mur politique
89	1	3	exclusive 11	exclusive
98	5	8	It not possible	It is not possible
108	4	3	in a in-between	in an in-between
148	5	5	is constantly	are constantly
164	3		la cita aparece con comillas	debe aparecer sin comillas
168	2	3	one artistic projects	one artistic project
186	4	2	in these three cases	in these two cases

*Además, hay dos notas a pie de página que se han perdido / Also, there are two missing footnotes:

- En la página 33, al final del cuarto párrafo, debería haber una nota a pie de página, la cual aclara que la argumentación sobre el concepto de “constituting act” ya la he desarrollado en un ensayo para clase que redacté durante mi formación en la Universidad de Utrecht (MA Theatre Studies) en el que analizo la performatividad del profesionalismo en el mundo de la danza. / On page 33, at the end of the 4th paragraph, there should be a footnote explaining that I have further developed the argument concerning the concept of “constituting act” as part of a class essay that I wrote during my MA Theatre Studies at Utrecht University, in which I focus on the performativity of professionalism in the dance field.
- En la página 51, al final del primer párrafo, debería haber una nota a pie de página aclarando que este Capítulo 2 de la tesis se articula como una almazuela, como un monstruo de Frankenstein construido de retales, como un collage polifónico en el que la profusión de citas resta continuidad al texto, que es constantemente interrumpido por una nueva voz. El objetivo es, precisamente, abordar el análisis de las fronteras desde esta polifonía. Construir un archivo de referencias. El capítulo es la expresión de mi propio proceso de investigación sobre el tema, corre parejo a mi propio ir descubriendo, casi como un diario. ¿Es esto —quizás— un ejemplo de lo que Félix Guattari denominaría *autopoiesis*? / On page 51, at the end of the first paragraph, there should be a footnote the aim of which is to explain that this Chapter 2 of the PhD Thesis has been developed as a patchwork, as a monster of Frankenstein that is made of fragments, as a polyphonic collage in which the great amount of quotes denies the continuity of the text, which is constantly being interrupted by a new voice. The objective, indeed, is to analyze borders from this polyphonic perspective. Building an archive made of references. The chapter is the expression of my own researching process on the topic, it runs parallel to my own discoveries, as if it was a diary. Is this —maybe— an example of what Félix Guattari would call *autopoiesis*?

“Écrire est une vanité, si ce n’est pour l’ami.
Pour l’ami que l’on ne connaît pas encore, aussi.”
Comité Invisible, *À nos amis*

“The reader of these pages should not look for detailed documentation of every word. In treating of the general problems of culture one is constantly obliged to undertake predatory incursions into provinces not sufficiently explored by the raider himself. To fill in all the gaps in my knowledge beforehand was out of the question for me. I had to write now, or not at all.
And I wanted to write.”
J. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*

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(No nos engañemos: estas dos páginas son la parte más importante de la tesis).

SUMMARY

This PhD Thesis examines how frontier architecture functions, how it relates to artistic practices and what are the possibilities of an ethics of architecture. As argued by some authors, such as Bernard Tschumi, architectural structures are intrinsically performative and violent. Architecture becomes a violent event as soon as it intervenes in and obstructs life by preventing certain movements, by imposing certain choreographies or by avoiding access to certain spaces, for example. Architecture, then, performatively conditions and restricts the world. The border is the chosen landscape that I focus on, in order to theorize about the performativity and violence inherent to architecture. Two specific frontier contexts will be discussed to analyze how space is produced: the West Bank in Palestine, and Western Sahara. These borderlands are also addressed in relation to other borderscapes: the two fences of Ceuta and Melilla, the US-Mexico wall and the fences that are being built in Europe in order to manage the refugee crisis. The aim of looking at these different border structures is analyzing the similarities between them and discussing to what extent all these walls function similarly and are part of the same type of strategies for sociopolitical management. On the other hand, looking at the interaction between borders and bodies will allow to focus on techniques of resistance and re-appropriation that happen in these frontier contexts. Therefore, this PhD Thesis also explores the potential of artistic practices to intervene in border spaces both in Palestine and Western Sahara.

As it has been previously mentioned, this research on borders is also used to rethink the discussion about an ethics of architecture and to argue that it is necessary to recognize that performativity and violence are intrinsic to architecture in order to develop such an ethics.

Finally, this PhD Thesis develops artistic practice not only as one of its topics, but also as a research methodology with the aim of stressing the epistemological importance of the arts.

RESUMEN

Esta tesis examina el modo en el que la arquitectura opera, cómo se relaciona con prácticas artísticas, y cuáles son las posibilidades para desarrollar una ética de la arquitectura. Como algunos autores y autoras –como Bernard Tschumi– apuntan, las estructuras arquitectónicas son intrínsecamente performativas y violentas. La arquitectura se convierte en un evento violento tan pronto como interviene en y obstruye la vida, evitando ciertos movimientos, imponiendo coreografías o impidiendo el acceso a ciertos espacios, por ejemplo. Así, la arquitectura condiciona y restringe el mundo. La frontera es el paisaje elegido para teorizar sobre esta performatividad y violencias inherentes a la arquitectura. Dos contextos de frontera específicos serán discutidos con el objetivo de analizar el modo en el que el espacio se produce: Cisjordania, en Palestina, y Sáhara Occidental. Estos paisajes de frontera son abordados en relación con otros paisajes de frontera: las dos vallas de Ceuta y Melilla, el muro que separa EEUU de México y las vallas que están siendo construidas en Europa para afrontar la crisis de refugiadas. El objetivo en prestar atención a estas estructuras fronterizas tan diferentes es analizar las similitudes que pueda haber entre ellas y discutir hasta qué punto todas ellas funcionan de un modo semejante como parte del mismo tipo de estrategias de gestión sociopolítica. Por otro lado, analizar las interacciones entre fronteras y cuerpos permitirá centrar la atención en las formas de resistencia y re-apropiación que tienen lugar en estos contextos fronterizos. De este modo, esta tesis explora el potencial de las prácticas artísticas para intervenir en las fronteras de Palestina y Sáhara Occidental.

Como ha sido apuntado previamente, esta investigación sobre fronteras también sirve para repensar el debate acerca de una ética de la arquitectura y para sostener que es necesario reconocer que la arquitectura es intrínsecamente performativa y violenta para desarrollar dicha ética.

Finalmente, esta tesis desarrolla las prácticas artísticas no solo como uno de sus temas, sino también como metodología de investigación con el objetivo de enfatizar la importancia epistemológica de las artes.

PART 1: METHODOLOGY AND THEORY

CHAPTER 0: INTRODUCTION

“Y, la verdad, no hemos seguido una metodología muy académica. Creemos que a estas alturas imagináis cómo y por qué: la academia trabaja para sí misma, se autorreferencia, es endogámica y elitista hasta límites enfermizos, más allá de excepciones personales, atrapa en sus formas de mirar, de delimitar lo que es relevante y lo que no. Y aquí pretendemos todo lo contrario: ser exogámicos y promiscuos, mezclarnos, saltarnos los formalismos de la academia y hacer algo tan imperfecto, tan informal y tan subjetivo como útil. Algo tan vivo, abierto y a la vez sencillo y accesible que dé urticarias al tribunal de calificación”

Carabancheleando¹

In this introduction, the main objectives, topics, methodologies and concepts developed during the researching and writing processes of this PhD Thesis will be defined and described. A description of the structure of the text will be also provided with the aim of clarifying not only the way how information is organized, but also the way how the book itself (as an object) has been created from an aesthetic point of view.

1. OBJECTIVES AND RELEVANCE

Sometimes, the important thing is neither to ask the necessary question nor to state a sophisticated hypothesis, but to have an objective.

I have discussed this problem with different colleagues and friends during the four years that I have spent writing my PhD Thesis. The conclusion was clear: there is not an *only way* to start a research. Some researchers start with a hypothesis that is afterwards tested; others, try to start with a question that is afterwards answered, or a problem that is afterwards solved. I chose to start with a different objective: this PhD Thesis examines the relationship between architectural structures of border spaces in Palestine and Western Sahara and contemporary artistic practices². The objective is not to prove anything, nor to solve anything, but to provide a perspective from which to look at a

1 Carabancheleando. 2017. *Diccionario de las periferias. Métodos y saberes autónomos desde los barrios*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños.

2 Members of the Grupo Surrealista de Madrid, during the conference “Anarquismo y surrealismo” –that took place in Local Anarquista Magdalena (Madrid) on January 24th, 2019–, distinguished between art (and artistic practice) and poetic actions by arguing that any form of art implies an object and a spectacle at some point –which places art within the *system*–, whereas poetic actions allow for a development of a different relationship with the world. In this PhD Thesis this distinction is not made because poetic actions are seen as artistic manifestations. The poetic and the artistic are interrelated. This does not mean that I deny that art is a marketable product. What this does mean is that art is developed in many different ways and that the Market is but one of the different paths –maybe one of the most visible and powerful, though– available for artistic practice.

given *reality*. Thus, the main goal is to create a conceptual and theoretical frame as well as a series of tools that can be useful in order to look at artistic practices in border landscapes. As Miguel Morey argues in the introduction of the Spanish translation of Deleuze's *Diferencia y repetición* (1988), it is important to know the difference between a *question* and a *problem*:

Y no porque los problemas sean inefables: más bien al contrario, si es cierta la correspondencia entre sentido y problema, los problemas son aquello de lo que no se puede dejar de hablar. Pero no son un mero hablar que quedaría acallado cuando una respuesta lo saturara adecuadamente, como ocurre con las preguntas. No constituyen un momento de carencia subjetiva que el saber vendría a colmar: son formas positivas, y en tanto que tales, no tienen solución (Morey 1988, 21).

This PhD Thesis is an attempt to develop a problem, the goal is not to ask a question. Thus, there is no solution/answer. Or, again in 's words:

Quizás debería decirse que en su positividad misma está la solución. La respuesta a los problemas está en el modo como cada época o cada pensamiento (cada perspectiva, en definitiva) los determina, articula sus elementos y les impone una disposición específica. O dicho de otro modo: las soluciones empíricas a un problema determinado están dadas en el modo como se determina este problema (*ibid.*).

The worst thing that could happen to this PhD Thesis is not to be wrong (to be mistaken). The worst thing would be that the way that the problem has been developed does not make sense:

Y ello querrá decir también que lo peor que le puede ocurrir a un pensamiento, el riesgo que amenaza al pensador, no es precisamente equivocarse. Lo que está en juego no es cómo evitar el error, sino cómo producir sentido [...]. Lo grave estriba en la pregunta por cómo determinar los problemas, cómo producir sentido, y no en cómo convertir las preguntas en respuestas (*ibid.*, 22).

As a consequence of the above, this PhD Thesis is not a question of *knowing* an answer or a solution, but a continuous and never-ending question of *learning* the problem –as Morey argues when talking about the Deleuzian concept of *problem* (*ibid.*)–.

The first step to develop a problem is to choose a perspective. I define a *perspective* as one of the possible paths to get into the world. Building and developing a perspective may help in the process of understanding a reality from a different angle, revealing the links between that reality and many others that remained invisible or hidden until *now* –and when I say *hidden* I mean that they have not been noted enough until now–. A perspective does not deny the possibility of other perspectives, it contributes to the enlargement of knowledge. It provides and implies a series of *things* or *objects* (concepts, theories, positions, practices) that may be useful to understand the surroundings. This is why this PhD Thesis has nothing to do with Truth –in a fundamentalist way–. It does not follow The Truth (that can be related with Morey's notion of the *answer*), nor Accuracy. It follows *sense* and *consistency*.

Through this PhD Thesis, many things are *done*, and even *made*, beyond the objective that has just been described. The reader will discover these *things* during the process of reading.

The main question to be answered in this first part of the PhD Thesis is *why space*. Why is *space* so relevant to understand the Israeli-Palestinian and the Moroccan-Sahrawi conflicts? Octavio Paz once said that America was not a *place*, but a *discourse*. Following his logic, one can say that Palestine and Western Sahara are not places, but cartographies. Their existence is closely linked to the production of space. When one pronounces the names *Palestine* or *Western Sahara* a cartographic image easily comes up in our minds: maps that represent the development of the conflicts, how space has been occupied, how Palestine and Western Sahara have become smaller and smaller. The fact that the collective imagination is full of Palestinian and Sahrawi maps is not a random issue. Palestine and Western Sahara are principally cartographic discourses.

2. HOW?

It was early in the morning. I was walking the dog and I noticed a line drawn on the pavement of the square that is close to the building where I live. Just below the line, two simple words had been written –probably by the kids that play there every evening–: *hasta aquí* (until here).

It is so simple to create a border.

Space is always there, space is always being produced.

In 2016, Fatima, a colleague from University, and me decided that we wanted to re-design the office where we were working together. We wanted to feel more comfortable during the period of time that we were going to spend while working as PhD researchers.

In 2017, Rodrigo –my roommate and friend–, and me decided to remodel the flat where we were living.

In 2018, a friend developed a research on the repressive architecture of our University.

Space is always there, space is always being produced.

Also in 2018, we organized an event called Toma el Césped (Take the Grass) at University. The aim of the event was to inhabit the space in a more intense way, to produce a territory, to develop affective ties that linked us to the place where we spend so many hours in order to make friends, to perform communal ways of living.

Space is always there, space is always being produced.

Fences and walls are everywhere: when I go rock climbing, fences are there in the countryside; when I visit a school to develop any workshop, fences are there in playgrounds; any piece of waste ground is inevitably fenced in the city...

Space is always there, space is always being produced.

A friend of mine, who works as a sound technician at the *Lion King* musical, told me that one of his colleagues decided to *build* a wall between him and the rest of the orchestra in order to listen to

himself better while playing the piano.

Space is always there, space is always being produced.

I participated in the riots that took place in March 2018 after the death of a *mantero* in Lavapiés (Madrid). Space and links were produced. Friends were there taking care of each other. Actions were taken against the symbols of the racist and capitalist system, against the racist landscape.

Every case of manspreading is a question of space and patriarchy. Or about the Space of Patriarchy.

Space is always there, space is always being produced.

Becoming increasingly sensitive to space and being aware of how space was happening around me was key to the development of this PhD Thesis. However, living as a PhD researcher during these four years has not only consisted of looking at space (including looking at the relationship between my own body and the surrounding landscape while climbing, while walking, while biking), but also of thinking about what research actually is.

As a PhD researcher you are always in danger, as a PhD researcher you are a precarious worker whose working conditions can always become worse. Thus, working as a PhD researcher has become an opportunity not only for developing my skills as a scholar, but also as a militant. Thanks to the solidarity of many people (students and teachers), it became possible to achieve awareness of my own material existence. Of what made sense, and what did not. It was a period of time during which we all learnt about law, administrative questions and justice. We were fighting together in the assemblies, inside the community, with friends.

I discovered that habitually researching is neither a question of truth, nor a question of science. It is not even a question of knowledge (or, not only). It is a question of power as well.

It became clear.

And knowledge is not produced at University. It is produced in every single space where we exist.

It became clear.

My own experience as a researcher *is* a source of information: the anxiety I suffered when participating in International Conferences taught me something about Academia. The violence I experienced when participating in seminars taught me something about Academia³.

Individualism is always there.

3 When I criticize the way of doing of the Academia I do not want to place myself in a superior moral position. What I try is to produce a comfortable space that allows for a meeting between the writer and the reader to happen, a meeting that gathers different positions: a space that allows disagreement and dissension and rejects violence. I try to make Academia become inhabitable and livable at some point. Coming back again and again to a reflexive position with regard to the Academia is a recurring practice in this PhD Thesis. The practice of thinking about *what I am doing while researching* has become as important as the research itself, just in the same way that the comedian Miguel Noguera in his Ultrashows and Infrashows keeps on talking about himself being talking and reflecting on the *discourse*.

Is it possible to produce knowledge by addressing the *común*, the common, the communal? I am not only myself. Nothing can be produced without the *común*.

It became clear.

Thinking about the act of *researching* itself became part of the research. Thinking about working conditions became part of the research. Experience became part of the research. The body that is writing these lines is not out of the world, it is not out of any context.

It takes part of the world.

3. WHAT?

As I said before, the main aim of this PhD Thesis is to look at the relationship between frontier architecture in Palestine and Western Sahara and artistic practices. This can be defined as the *object* of this research (although I will later problematize this question of the *object*). *Re-appropriation* is one of the main concepts that is discussed in these pages. I look at the relationship between these two *worlds* (architecture and artistic practices) through *the* concept. I do not try to prove that artistic practices imply a process of re-appropriation of architecture, since it would mean I start with a hypothesis (and it is false, as I have argued at the beginning of this chapter). Instead, I look at the effects of looking at the relationship between arts and architecture through the concept of re-appropriation. In order to achieve this goal, I specifically *do* several things:

- **Descriptions:** I look at frontier architecture and artistic practices and try to describe them, to define the –let's say– *surface* of its existence (phenomenological approach)⁴. Description is developed in a very specific way: instead of looking at architecture and artistic practices from outside, I look at them from inside. This means I look at architecture from architecture and at artistic practices from artistic practices. For example, I look at the Israeli wall in Palestine from the perspective of several architects such as Eyal Weizman or Léopold Lambert, who *use* architecture both as a tool for practice (to produce spaces) and analysis (to develop discourses and tools for understanding space).
- **Discourse analysis:** Space is not only the physical container that surrounds us. This idea will be further developed in this PhD Thesis. This implies that we are part of space and our practices are part of space. Thus, our discourses and what we build through them (producing a *subjectivation* of space) are part of space. The analysis of discourses allows us to understand space also as a social web of interrelationships. When I say *discourses* I refer to public speeches delivered by institutions, politicians or the market (dominant discourses) as well as private discourses to which I had access by talking to, interacting with or

4 The phenomenological approach will be further explained in next chapter.

interviewing different people (life stories, experiences).

- **Analysis of artworks and artistic practices:** I look at several examples of art on borders and analyze them through the concept of re-appropriation. Some colleagues have accused me of being elitist because I look at art instead of looking at other (*more important*, they maintain) social practices that take place in border spaces. This happens because there is a very limited idea of what art is. It is normally seen as what is made by a professional artist and is exhibited in a museum, an art gallery, a theater building or any other power-space (art institution). However, I look at art as a practice, as a way to relate to space. I analyze the artworks made by *professional artists* –that take part of the (global) art market–, but I also look at artworks made by *anyone*. I do not focus on the specific *subject* that has made a specific artwork. Instead, I look at the artwork as a moment in the development of a practice that can be carried out by any person/collective/group. In chapter 4, I specifically look at Palestinian and Sahrawi artists, art collectives, art projects, art events, whereas in chapter 5, I focus on the projects I have designed in the field in collaboration with locals. Through this PhD I do not discuss what art actually is and what the limits of art are. I try to address projects and practices that aesthetically intervene in border spaces and that are somehow related to the word *art*. Even though there are (political, economic...) differences between professional artists and people making art, I try to look at artistic practices and the relationship between them and architecture. Analyzing the role and characteristics of professionalism (and other processes such as institutionalization or commercialization) in the art world would be the topic of a different research. However, it is necessary to mention this topic in order to make the reader become aware of this dimension of art.
- **Practice:** I do not only look at art, but also practice it: it is a question of training. Thus, in order to understand the relationship between frontier architecture and artistic practices, I also developed my own projects *in the field* and took my experience as a relevant source of information and knowledge for this PhD Thesis. Therefore, I also look at *myself* as part of the research process.

In conclusion, the *sub-objects* (those that are studied as part of the process of looking at the *main object*) of this PhD Thesis would be: frontier architecture in Palestine and Western Sahara, discourses on borders, artistic practices (including my own) and the relationships between these three fields.

There are two main reasons why I chose to study these two borderscapes of Palestine and Western Sahara:

- They are historical borderscapes that are somehow paradigmatic and it is useful to study them in order to understand the way of working of many other frontier architectural

structures all over the world.

- The wall in Western Sahara and the wall in the West Bank (Palestine) differ in the way they are linked to space and the territory. The Israeli wall in Palestine is an urban one, it divides villages, cities and is physically experienced by bodies every day. On the other hand, the Moroccan wall in Western Sahara is placed far away from the Sahrawi refugee camps and from any inhabited place. Despite this main difference, it is interesting to compare these two contexts since they provide evidence of the different strategies developed to re-appropriate The Border. Some of these strategies are similar whereas others are different. The main aim in comparing these two walls is to address the differences that make it possible to distinguish one from the other, but also to describe the similarities between both of them, which makes it possible to develop both specific (local) and shared (trans-local) strategies of re-appropriation.

4. SOURCES AND TOOLS

The main authors whose reflections and analysis have worked as the conceptual basis for this PhD Thesis are:

- **Phenomenologists and performativists:** Phenomenology has been addressed as a perspective from which to look at the existence of border architectural structures. Taking this frame as a perspective implies that there is neither a *behind* nor an *under* architectural structures that has to be discovered in order to understand architecture. Every object and its components and relationships are on the surface, they are exterior things, they are existence. On the other hand, the concept of performance is necessary in order to understand the way spaces *do* things and *happen*. Space is not seen as the place where things happen, but as the thing-happening-and-producing-performances: the thing performing its own existence.
- **Bernard Tschumi and Dorita Hannah.** These two authors have developed a theoretical approach to architecture through the concept of *event*. I take their analysis in order to explain that space is a dynamic entity that, as I have already said, happens. Space is an event. Space is something that cannot merely *be*, but *is being* (*existing*).
- **Eyal Weizman, Léopold Lambert and Gaici Nah Bachir:** Weizman and Lambert are two architects that have used their knowledge on architecture to analyze the characteristics of the border (the Israeli wall) in the West Bank. On the other hand, Nah Bachir is a Sahrawi man that served in the army that has also used his knowledge on military strategy in order to analyze the characteristics of the Moroccan wall in Western Sahara. I focus on these three authors because they analyze frontier structures from inside two of the disciplines that made

the walls possible: architecture and military strategy.

- **Henri Lefebvre:** Lefebvre developed a huge amount of ideas on space. What is relevant for this PhD Thesis is the idea that space is a production –not a product–. It is always being produced. And it is not necessarily produced by people, since people are part of space and they are also produced. Production happens as an irremediable and intrinsic characteristic of space. Thus, artistic practices and artistic strategies to re-appropriate space are part of this process of production of space. I also look at Lefebvre's concept of *social space* and compare it with Bourdieu's approaches to the same expression –since Bourdieu also talks about *social space* but he does not mean the same as Lefebvre–.
- **Gloria E. Anzaldúa:** The concept of *borderlands*, that was widely theorized by Anzaldúa in her book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987) helped enormously in order to understand the border not as a line, but as an area. And not merely as an area, but as a landscape, a volume and even as an atmosphere. The border, then, becomes a territory that can be, and indeed is, inhabited and embodied.
- **Luisa Martín Rojo:** Martín Rojo has written several articles and essays on the topic of *linguistic landscape*, which was useful in order to understand the relationship between the production of discourses on borders and the production of space itself. There is a link between the material structure and characteristics of frontier architecture and the speeches, messages and words that are said and pronounced when talking about borders –that are but a different dimension of materiality–.
- **Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari:** The concept of *rhizome* has been key for the development of this PhD Thesis both as a *research* and as an *object* (a book). Theoretically, it has helped in the process of building a consistent analysis that places artistic practices in a relevant position regarding its relationship to the border. It means that, looking at the relationship between frontier architecture and artistic practices through the *rhizome* has made it possible to destroy the hierarchical perspective from which knowledge is normally produced and allowed a non-hierarchical point of view to arise. This does not mean that *power* (and more specifically, the imbalance of power) is not taken into account when referring to the relationship between frontier architecture and artistic practices, but that the non-hierarchical and rhizomatic approach to this relationship allows for a complexization of reality. Other concepts such as territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization have been also applied when talking about the process of re-appropriation. Finally, the rhizome has also implied a strategy of thinking about what this PhD Thesis is as an object, as a space where words are placed. What is a book? What is the relationship between a book and the world? These question will be answered in the last part of this chapter.

- **Comité Invisible, Tiqqun, Consejo Nocturno:** These three collective authorships have reflected a lot on the way political practices produce ways of inhabiting territories and how these intense and political ways of inhabiting imply a powerful weapon against the metropolis, meaning the colonial power, the institution, the capitalist machinery, the Empire. Developing artistic practices can be seen as an intense way of inhabiting a space (in this case, a border space). This is why the connection between the *object* that is studied and the discourses of Tiqqun, Comité Invisible and Consejo Nocturno is made.
- **Sirin Adlbi Sibai and Houria Bouteldja:** The ideas developed by both of these decolonial authors –such as Adlbi Sibai's concept of the *epistemological cage*, or Bouteldja's theory of *revolutionary love*– are taken into account with the aim of producing knowledge from a decolonial perspective/practice. This does not mean that I achieved to avoid any colonial gesture. This PhD Thesis is still a colonial artifact. I do not deny it, since it has been made in a colonial context. However, it carries in each of its pages a decolonial effort. Sometimes, this decolonial effort does not consist of solving the colonial question, but of pointing to the contradictions that coloniality (which is an apparatus of power that I embody) forces me to perform. As Maria José Canelo (my supervisor during my research stage at Centro de Estudos Sociais in Coimbra) said, this decolonial perspective sometimes implies “não resolver as contradicções, mas sinalá-las”. The decolonial effort, then, also consists of making the decolonial/colonial tension visible instead of hiding it as if the colonial question had been solved. This does not imply that I feel sorry for what I have written, but that I feel epistemologically responsible.

On the other hand, the main tools used for the analysis and production of knowledge have been:

- **Uncreative writing:** Kenneth Goldsmith developed this discipline. There is no need for a creative writing anymore. There is writing everywhere, texts are there to be used, re-appropriated, reproduced, copied, pasted, managed. There is no need of new things. As the artist Douglas Huebler stated in the catalog/exhibition *January 5 – 31, 1969* (1969) “the world is full of objects, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add any more. I prefer, simply, to state the existence of things in terms of time and/or place”. What is necessary is to do new things with the things that are already there. The question is not what has to be created anymore, but how to interact with what is already existing. I take this perspective in order to use it as a tool for the process of writing and thinking. I do not try to create new things, nor to be innovative in any way. There is a lot that has already been accurately said about many things. I do not want to be brilliant, but to provide a training. I sometimes repeat what has already been said, and this is the only way to train a way of looking at reality. Decoloniality has to be trained, for example. Training is not repeating the same thing in the

exact same way. Training is a repetition of a practice. This PhD Thesis is the result of a training. It is but a rehearsal. Beyond, Kenneth Goldsmith and his development of the concept and practice of uncreative writing, I also take the perspective of local (Spanish) collectives such as Genoma Poético and the practice developed in specific spaces such as LetraLAB in La Ingobernable, whose work delves into this perspective. Writing a PhD Thesis from an uncreative writing point of view does not imply a lack of ambition (meaning that I do not actively pursue certain goals). It implies that I try not to do researching from a capitalist perspective based on *academic productivity* and *academic competitive excellence*. The aim is not to produce a *new* cognitive object at all costs for the sake of the Newness' dictatorship, but to provide a broad debate for the sake of re-thinking a question as many times as necessary –no matter how much time it requires, there is no hurry–.

- **Performing arts:** The performing arts are a field that has provided me with many tools to apply in the process of writing and researching and also in doing fieldwork. It allowed me to participate in some spaces not only as a researcher but also as an actress/performer, which made it possible to develop relationships to space and people in a different way. I did not want to extract information from the field, but to participate as an artist, which is a less colonial category because it places me in a less hierarchical position. This does not mean I hid myself as a researcher during fieldwork periods with the aim of getting information, but that I did not put my academic objectives in first place when interacting with a specific community, for example. I decided that respecting those communities was more important. Respect came before academic achievements.
- **Decoloniality:** Decoloniality is not only a perspective from which to think, but also a practice from where to exist. Thus, decoloniality has become a tool applied for the construction of ideas, for the development of the researching planning and the structure of the text. It has also been a necessary tool to be applied when doing field research since it was necessary to be aware of the power relationships between Academia and the communities I visited or interacted with. I have to warn the reader, though: decoloniality is not only based on quoting as many non-white and non-western authors as possible. Developing such a strategy would be, indeed, a colonial and exotizing approach to decoloniality. Decolonizing the production of knowledge implies a process of developing non-violent ways of performing and inhabiting the Academia.
- **Mix of techniques:** I have used different techniques coming from the social sciences, such as the focus groups, but I have mixed them with artistic practices. The description of each type of hybrid technique is described in each case in the following chapters.
- **Dérive (drift):** Talking about and analyzing space without being used to look at space every

day is impossible. The practice of looking at space and becoming aware of its structure, its characteristics, its meanings, its violences is, again, a training that goes far beyond Academia. This is why drifting has become a tool for the developing of this research. It has made it possible for my body and its senses to become increasingly sensitive to space.

- **Conversations:** Talking to people has become one of the main sources of knowledge. I do not only mean talking to people that have been interviewed by me or people that have provided me with relevant information, but also friends to whom I have shared and discussed ideas. They have contributed to this PhD Thesis theoretically, practically and affectively in a degree that cannot be mensurable. I quote them in this PhD Thesis, just in the same way I quote Gilles Deleuze or any other author. I also use the word *conversations* here because I was not interested in interviewing people to do statistics. The aim was to gather stories that define different experiences related to the topic of the PhD Thesis: the relationship between artistic practices and borders.

5. METHODOLOGIES

I have not been using only one type of methodology during the PhD researching process. Instead, I have chosen to develop a multidisciplinary, also meaning multiple, approach to the practice of producing knowledge. It was not my objective to achieve The Truth –it would have been a very presumptuous goal– but to develop a decolonial discourse (among other possible discourses) on the topic of frontier spaces that may help for the understanding of the border as an event that happens in-between the lives of certain bodies that do not always resign themselves to the fact of being victims and that consciously re-appropriate *the wall*. In the preface to his book *Crítica de la Razón Indolente. Contra el Desperdicio de la Experiencia. Volumen I* (2000), Boaventura de Sousa Santos reminds us the words of the Greek philosopher Epicharmus, who once said that mortals should only think mortal thoughts. I also take Epicharmus' words as an starting point from which to *talk* (and *write*) with the aim of reminding you, the readers, that it is not my attempt to produce universal thoughts, but mortal ones. Local ones. Situated ones. This mortal and multidisciplinary way of researching is delimited by four main fields that define the area in which this thesis can be placed. This four fields are the arts (specially the performing arts), the activisms, the decolonial epistemologies of the south and the decolonial feminisms. However, these words that I have just written have to be problematized: I, as a white queer-woman, do not want to occupy the space of other non-white and non-western voices that are decolonizing knowledge and epistemologies in a much more radical, effective and real way. This PhD Thesis is aimed to accompany these voices..

Decoloniality is not only a perspective or an amount of theories, but also a practice. Thus, I tried

to develop a decolonial way of researching and writing not only by producing a certain type of discourse and by addressing a specific series of concepts, but also by:

- **Structuring the PhD Thesis in a way that is not related to the academic way of doing.**

The way information is placed in a piece of paper is also related to certain practices. The idea that real knowledge can only be produced in the Academia (with capital letters) and that it has to be expressed by following very specific patterns (writing papers, abstracts, key words, attending conferences, etc) is also colonial, because it imposes violent constraints to the expression of ideas, theories, discoveries and, therefore, defines what is knowledge and distinguishes it from what cannot be called knowledge. As Loreto Ares argues at the beginning of her PhD Thesis, “[el] proceso de elaboración de una tesis doctoral, [es] una forma de trabajo altamente ritualizada que trata de fijar una posición que sea académica” (Ares 2017, 22). One must be aware that the physical structure of the document is closely related to its content, and that the homogenization of the way of doing causes a homogenization of the way of knowing. This is why I tried to be decolonial also by taking into account the dramaturgy of the PhD Thesis. A description of this dramaturgical structure is also provided in this chapter.

- **Developing artistic practices and poetic methodologies as part of the techniques to produce knowledge.** I tried to delve into the epistemological dimension of the arts and how some of the tools that are provided by this field can also be applied in order to reflect, analyze and write about an *object academically*. I take the –usually, performing– arts both as a practice and as a perspective for analysis. The performing arts are used as a perspective for analysis even when looking at artworks that may not be categorized as *performing artworks*. This means, I apply a performing-arts perspective to look at visual art, painting or installation art –among others – as well.

Therefore, another objective in addressing a multidisciplinary approach to the research methodologies (from now, in plural) was also to try to decolonize not only the way we look at borders but also the way knowledge on borders itself is produced and expressed. This is why I have chosen spaces-others from where to academically reflect, such as the space of arts. This PhD Thesis addresses the arts as strategies to re-appropriate border spaces, but they are also strategies for knowing: the arts can also be researching methodologies. It means that I do not only look at the arts and analyze the way artists re-appropriate frontier spaces, but that I also practice the arts as a researching methodology. *The arts*, then, is not only a topic here, but also a method of knowing and expressing knowledge. Many researchers, scholars and academicians would argue that what I am now talking about is only an example of participatory observation and field research since I am a researcher that studies her *object* by inserting herself in the context and is in contact with and take

part in the processes that happen there. However, I would rather call it observed participation, as Teresa Cunha does in her lecture “Não somos a sombra da tua sombra, não somos a sombra da tua mão, nem a sombra do teu cão. Reflexões epistemo-metodológicas, lugares de enunciação, campos, dispositivos e as histórias delas” (as part of the “Methodologies-others from the South” workshop, CLACSO, March 15th, 2017). Observed participation implies the main goal is to participate –not to research– in the processes, but always by consciously being aware of what happens when participating. This point of view on research techniques has also been taken with the aim of developing non-extractivist ways of producing knowledge. In this thesis, communities and people are not understood as sources from which to obtain information, but as subjects to whom a dialogue is established.

In order to summarize the main methodological decisions that I have taken during the research process I provide a list that includes different techniques and concepts that may be helpful:

- **Observed participation:** As already said, observed participation implies that the main goal in doing this PhD has been participation instead of observation. Observation has always come afterwards. The participation in several projects (MOVLAB, ARTifariti, an on-line collaborative map workshop, a feminist cartographies workshop, a creative process to design a Jane's Walk, as well as several conferences) has made it possible to look and experience the *object* from inside and from below. Of course, this type of researching methodology implies the question of objectivity and distance from the studied *object*. I will discuss this topic later when defining another main methodological pillar of this PhD Thesis.
- **Non-extractivism:** This concept has also been already defined. Non-extractivism implies that the objective of looking at the environment and the communities that inhabit it as something that *talked* to me during the researching process (and I talked to it, too), not as something from which *I* took any knowledge. As Donna Haraway argued in her article “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective” (1988) when talking about her main concept, which will be further developed afterwards, “situated knowledges require that the object of knowledge be pictured as an actor and agent, not as a screen or a ground or a resource, never finally as slave to the master that closes off the dialectic in his unique agency and authorship of 'objective' knowledge” (Haraway 1988, 592).
- **Pluriversalism:** This term has been developed by several decolonial authors and it has been coined with the aim of arguing that there is not a unique, complete and absolute discourse on what is there outside (reality, the world). This PhD Thesis recognizes that there are many other ways of studying and expressing knowledge about the same topic that this PhD Thesis addresses. The goal in writing this study is not to exhaust the discourse on borders, but to be

inserted in the rhizomatic and transnational web of voices that talk about it from the point of view of decoloniality and the arts.

- **Decoloniality:** One of the main theoretical and methodological frameworks that is here addressed has to do with architecture and the thought of authors such as Bernard Tschumi and Dorita Hannah that related it to the concept of *event*, as it has already been explained in the previous section. The second one, though, has to do with the way knowledge is produced. This second main theoretical framework from which I have been looking at and participating in several processes in order to write this thesis, then, is decoloniality, since it provides a critical reflection on the role of epistemologies in the process of perpetuating colonial practices. The work and ways of doing of authors such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Ramón Grosfoguel, Walter D. Mignolo and Sirin Adlbi Sibai, as well as some of the concepts they have coined (abyssal thinking, border subjectivity-ontology, epistemological prison) are key to understand the point of departure of these pages that try to provide knowledge on borders without keeping on reproducing colonial discourses and ways of doing.
- **Undisciplinarity:** Through this thesis I do not only try to achieve a multidisciplinary way of thinking, but also an undisciplined one. This does not mean that I want to break all the scientific rules, but that I try to make the academic space become wider and include practices-others that are valid for the production of knowledge, too. Through this undisciplined approach I also try to go beyond the graphocentrism (meaning the privilege of writing over ways-others of expressing knowledge) characteristic of academic discourses. Thus, undisciplinarity is also visible in the way this PhD Thesis is organized and expressed.
- **Hybridity:** One of the practices aimed to achieve undisciplinarity is the development of hybrid researching tools. For example, I have mixed the ritual of focus groups (a qualitative tool mainly designed for social sciences) with artistic practice (dance) in a workshop with the aim of looking at the way oral discourses on borders are related to body⁵ discourses on borders. This practice will be further explained in chapter 5.
- **Situated knowledge:** Donna Haraway is one of the authors that has reflected on this practice. Producing knowledge from a specific position, becoming aware of it and defining it to the reader/listener/receiver is key to become responsible of what a researcher says. It is not possible to create immortal universal knowledge (at least, not from my point of view, as

5 When I say *body* in this PhD Thesis I do not mean *flesh*. Neither do I want to become a *bodyist* that tries to explain everything by using that concept. The body here is addressed as a place as well, as a portion of space that participates in the process of producing the social space, made of interrelationships. The body includes movement, gestures, subjectivities, ideas, and also the devices used by it such as tools, machines, discourses... It is broad, both organic and *inorganic* (in Karl Marx's terms); it is an organized body but it can also be a disorganized/unorganized body –or, as Artaud would call it: a *body without organs*–.

I have previously argued). This is why this research refuses the idea of what Haraway calls the *disembodied scientific objectivity* (1988). Knowledge is in this thesis produced from a specific place that I will later define. This position implies a certain point of view. Vision, as Haraway argues, has become the hegemonic sense. However, there are different types of visions allowed by different devices (organisms or machines) that implies different types of lives and different ways of organizing the world. Thus, what vision is true? This argument can also be applied to talk about perspectives. Different perspectives provide different ways of seeing. Provincializing the position from where the researcher sees and talks, as Chakrabarty did with Europe in his work *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (2000) is necessary. This provincialization implies recognizing that the place from where the researcher talks is not an aseptic *nowhere*. It also implies refusing the god trick: the illusion of looking at everything (the world, the reality) from an unlocated *nowhere* and from above (Haraway 1988). Researchers talk from specific places, locations and positions which means knowledge is always partly understood, it depends on meanings, interpretations, translations. There is always a partial sight, a local knowledge. “The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular. The science question in feminism is about objectivity as positioned rationality. Its images are not the products of escape and transcendence of limits (the view from above) but the joining of partial views and halting voices into a collective subject position that promises a vision of the means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions -of views from somewhere” (Harway 1988, 590).

- **Humility and silencing:** As a result of the objective of situating the knowledge that is here produced, one has to practice certain type of humility and silencing. Those are uncommon practices in the academic field –do not confuse silencing and (auto)censoring–. To be quiet while the subalternized others talk has never been well considered. However, silence is the space for other voices to be spoken and listened. As I said, it is not my objective to exhaust the discourse on borders, neither is it to appropriate the voices of other subjects talking from different positions. Humility and silencing means others know more, know different things. In summary, the objective is not that one of “romanticizing and/or appropriating the vision of the less powerful while claiming to see from their positions” (Haraway 1988, 584), but the one of not usurping the right to talk of others.
- **Collapse and eco-social-knowledge:** Currently, researching is mainly based on the necessity of always being traveling in order to attend international conferences that usually hardly last for three or four days, participating in one-week workshops and doing short-term stays abroad. This implies a lack of responsibility regarding the environment and its communities.

And it also implies a lack of responsibility regarding one-self's life and its limits. This necessity of traveling, closely linked to the capitalist pattern that has conquered the field of academic productivity, produces a situation in which researchers are internationally well situated but locally isolated. There is no local webs for the production of knowledge, neither is there a close relationship between the knowledge that is being produced and society. This condition makes academic practice become non-sustainable both ecologically and socially. Becoming aware of this made me think about alternative ways of *being in the field* and *in the Academia*: is it possible to develop a research project from distance? Is it possible to produce valid knowledge from distance? What is the actual goal in attending international conferences?

- **Languages:** English is the main language used in this thesis (which, again, can be read as a *not-so-decolonial practice*). It was chosen as the main language because, even though I try to decolonize knowledge, I still live in a world that favors English over all; I still work in an academic institution (a University) that favors English over all; and I still need to use English if I want to have an international mention in my PhD. Researchers working at University depend on the requirements established. As Daniel Cardoso (a polyamory activist and researcher) argued in the conference “Colliding worlds: Knowledge between research and action”, that took place at CES, University of Coimbra on October 12th, 2017, I have been inside the education system since I was a child, so I do not know how life is outside Academia. Academia shapes the way I produce knowledge and, since Academia is a place to perform violence and to receive violence (because power is always involved), I end up reproducing some of these violences. The simple act of being here, then, implies a certain degree of violence that I produce and suffer. However, despite English is the main language in this PhD Thesis, it is not the only one. I have tried to get access to authors speaking in all the languages I can speak (Spanish, English, French, Portuguese and Arabic). I have also tried not to translate their words because I wanted to create a mosaic-glossia, a puzzle where different languages come together to express different ideas. This is why quotes are not translated into English. Sometimes, though, I could not find –or economically afford– the original version of certain texts. In these cases, I used translated versions.

On the other hand, I have to refer to my relationship to Arabic. Even though I studied Arabic Philology, my level of Arabic got worse during the years that I was studying Theater and Performing Arts because of a lack of practice (talking, writing, reading, listening to Arabic). However, speaking Arabic not-so-well has had several unexpected effects: when I have been in Arab-speaking contexts (during conferences or during my trips to do field research) my role as a researcher has developed in many interesting ways. Instead of being read as the

expert researcher, I have usually been read as the negotiator, as the bridge, as something hybrid. My incompetence in mastering linguistic skills in Arabic has allowed me to play a much more modest role both in academic and non-academic contexts. For example, when I visited the Sahrawi refugee camps in Tindouf, I stayed with a Sahrawi family and four other mates from Ireland and USA-Argentina that did not speak Arabic. Also, one of the members of the Sahrawi family could speak Spanish. Thus, languages were constantly changing and mixing. My role there was to negotiate meaning and semantics. It worked as a game. Words came and returned as a flow through our bodies. English, Spanish, Arabic... I was not the authority there. I was a mere participant. A link in the chain that guaranteed communication. Also, I have to say that, although the years that I spent learning theater techniques implied that I forgot most of my Arabic, those years also allowed me to develop my knowledge on artistic practices, which has been key to the development of this PhD Thesis as well. Knowing how to speak Arabic while having no idea about performativity, aesthetics, art or theater would have implied that this PhD Thesis does not exist (at least, as it *is*). I stress the importance of this point because, sometimes, I have been accused of a lack of *depth* by several colleagues because I did not speak fluent Arabic. This happened in contexts in which *they* had no idea about *artistic practices*. It seemed as if Arabic was the only tool that I had to master in order to fulfill the requirements of a successful research. A colleague once asked me: “Don’t you think you have to speak English in order to understand *Hamlet*?” However, he did not realize that you can also have access to *Hamlet* through theater and performing arts, since *Hamlet* is not only a text. It is *also* a text, but not only a text. Thus, there is a great amount of paths from where to enter a reality. Language is but one of these paths. There are several tools that are extremely important for a researcher.

Finally, I would like to add that my English is not perfect. This means that the reader may find some grammar mistakes in the way this PhD Thesis is written. I do not want to hide them, because they are the traces that remind you of my hybridism. It reminds you, the reader, that I do not belong to *here*. It is possible that, if I had written this PhD thesis in Spanish, I would have said different things: maybe, more complex, interesting and clear things. As a friend of mine –who comes from Germany– once said while talking in English: “I am much more clever in German!”

- **Object/subject/object:** It was not my aim to look at an *object* as if I was a *subject*, but to look at a machinery (a web of interrelationships) as if I were another machinery (a space –a body– where relationships also happen). This perspective has to do with the Deleuzian and Guattarian concept of rhizome. The idea was to approach a reality from a non-hierarchical perspective/practice, which implied that I was not doing research *on*, but research *with*

space, border structures and artistic practices. The strategies for *objectivation* that I followed after having designed the methodological tools did not implied the production of objects, but the production of objectivity –always by being aware that it implies epistemological limits–. On the other hand, my position as a performer/actress has caused that many scholars questioned my work as a researcher. They told me that I was not being objective because I was always wearing *the hat of the artist*, as if *they* were not wearing any hat: the hat of being white, the hat of being scholars, the hat of Academia –among others–. Ironically, this argument is the same that many Muslim colleagues have had to hear, specially when they wear the hijab. Or some friends that are PhD researchers and activists. Daniel Cardoso also described this reality and argued that, as an activist-researcher, you are seen by activists as having an *excess* of thinking and you are seen by scholars as having an *excess* of doing. “Academia fucks my symbolic capital as an activist, and activism fucks my symbolic capital as a researcher”, he said in the conference “Colliding worlds: Knowledge between research and action”, and added that, since there is an imbalance of power between Academia an activism, he chose to colonize Academia with activism and not the other way around. The problem is that this strategy implies that scholars delve into their argument: the lack of objectivity, the lack of objectivity, the lack of objectivity. This presumed *lack of objectivity* has also implied that my *object* of study has been understood as an *abject*. Daniel Cardoso made this difference between *object* and *abject* too during the mentioned conference in order to explain how certain topics or realities are less *sexy* for Academia than others because they are seen as non-academic or too much attached to life and the experience of the researcher. It seems as if there was no possible *object* if there is any type of affects involved. It seems as if science and knowledge can only happen if distance is guaranteed. The option that I have chosen is to describe my position⁶ –that is necessary incomplete, since I describe myself from my own position, which means there are some things that I cannot see– so that the reader can understand the limits of this PhD Thesis instead of avoiding proximity. As José Soeira also argued in the conference “Colliding worlds: Knowledge between research and action”, we have to create exceptions to the rules of Academia and the mainstream way how we produce scientific knowledge (by being collaborative, by taking care of each other, by addressing the importance of affects, for example). It is not a question of being an exception to the rule. As Soeira added, “the multiplication of exceptions is great, but without forgetting that we can also (and must) break the rules”. Deciding whether to break the rules or not was also a choice I had to make that was related to the money I was paid for doing my PhD. As Beatrice Gusmano, researcher at CES (Coimbra) said at the same conference “if

6 A white Spanish queer-woman living in Madrid and doing a PhD at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM) thanks to a FPI-UAM pre-doctoral contract.

you are paid to do your PhD, think about what you do with the money: your priorities. Use it well”.

- **Interviews:** Interviews were always conducted by email. When I met (physically) any person that provided me with ideas or information, what I developed was a talk. Interviews by email made it possible for interviewees to take their time, re-read what they wanted to say, and reflect on their own thoughts. Since a PhD Thesis is a document from and for Academia, I decided that providing interviewees with time to structure their own answers was a strategy of decolonization: it allowed them to take control over their own answers. Of course, it also implied that only people with some reading and writing skills could answer the questions and that implied a researching limitation. I became aware of the importance of taking care of interviewees when the artist Areej Mawasi sent an email and told me that she was angry at me because of one article I wrote. In that article I reflected on the role of graffiti made by women on the Israeli wall. In order to talk about Mawasi, I looked at pictures posted in her blog and many other articles from newspapers and magazines talking about her. However, even if I was taking information about her from public spaces, she got angry at me because I had not asked her for permission before analyzing her work. This is what made me wonder about the violence I perform from Academia without noticing it. This does not mean a scholar must always *be careful*, but that s/he has to *take care of the surroundings*. Always.
- **Field research:** I do not always come to the field to do field research or fieldwork. I sometimes developed *from-distance-projects* in collaboration with collectives from Palestine and Western Sahara. This implied the project itself became the field. Any collaborative project was happening both here and there. What I analyzed was the collaboration itself.

One can argue that the multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and undisciplinary approach to the *object* of this PhD Thesis implies a lack of profoundness. However, what it does imply is an enlargement of the surface. There was a choice to be made, and I chose to make the surface of knowledge wider instead of make it deeper.

6. STRUCTURE

There are several aspects that must be taken into account in order to understand the structure of this PhD Thesis:

- **The PhD Thesis as an object called *book*:** This PhD Thesis does not end at the physical limits of its pages. It has been written in close relation to other texts that I have been writing during the research period. The reflection on space and architecture made me think about the

relationship between space and cartographies, a topic that I examine in “Collaborative Cartographies: Counter-Cartography and Mapping Justice in Palestine” (2018); or the relationship between space and sports, which I analyze in “Climbing Walls to feel at Home: Palestinian Climbers reappropriating Space” (2015), for example. Thus, the PhD Thesis is but one little *object* placed in a prominent position inside a bigger cluster. However, it makes no sense without that cluster, without the other *objects* surrounding it. I mention this relationship between the PhD Thesis and other external texts because a book cannot exist without the links that relate it to the world outside it. There is not a cut that divides the book into two different spaces: its external and its internal structure. The book is not an object talking about the world without being in the world. Deleuze and Guattari reflected on what a book is in *Mille Plateaux* (1980): “Un livre n'a pas d'objet ni de sujet, il est fait de matières diversement formées, de dates et de vitesses très différentes. Dès qu'on attribue le livre à un sujet, on néglige ce travail des matières, et l'extériorité de leurs relations”(9).

And they delved into this topic by saying that:

C'est la même chose pour le livre et le monde : le livre n'est pas image du monde, suivant une croyance enracinée. Il fait rhizome avec le monde, il y a évolution parallèle du livre et du monde, le livre assure la déterritorialisation du monde, mais le monde opère une reterritorialisation du livre, qui se déterritorialise à son tour en lui-même dans Je monde (s'il en est capable et s'il le peut). Le mimétisme est un très mauvais concept, dépendant d'une logique binaire, pour des phénomènes d'une toute autre nature (*ibid.*, 18).

- **Style of citation:** I have used the author-date system of the Chicago Style of Citation⁷. However, since some references often required that more exhaustive information was provided in a footnote, I have also used the notes and bibliography system in few cases (specially to contextualize the quotes that initiate each chapter). Finally, even though the Chicago Style of Citation establishes that in order to quote anonymous works it is not necessary to specify that they are anonymous (you only have to omit the author from the citation), I have decided to make anonymous works appear as anonymous. For example, when I reproduce a quote from *Appel*, I do it this way: (Anonymous 2003, 34).
- **Footnotes:** I start numbering the footnotes from the beginning in each chapter.
- **Quotes:** I respect the style and grammar of the quotes and citations coming from different sources.
- **Authorship:** “Comme chacun de nous était plusieurs, ça faisait déjà beaucoup de monde” (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 9). I have not written this PhD Thesis alone. Firstly because I am not only *myself*. I am not my own self. There are many voices that shape what I am (am?). I have been writing this PhD Thesis during a period of time of four years, which

⁷ Online at: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

means that I have been discussing with myself a lot. On the other hand, I have developed this project thanks to many other people. Me saying *this* is not an example of false modesty, but an attempt to criticize the normative way of looking at authorship. I do believe that one cannot write any book or do any research only by herself as if one was actually *one*: individual, isolated, atomized. This is why I truly believe that it makes no sense to sign this PhD Thesis only by writing my name below the title. Of course, I have a responsibility here, and I do not try to hide my name behind a dust cloud in order not to answer to any question. What I try is to make the reader understand that the point of departure from which I started this PhD Thesis has nothing to do with any necessity of recognition.

- **Aesthetics, expression and meaning:** The way things are done is as important as the fact of doing that things. What I mean is that the way I have decided to structure this PhD Thesis is as important as what I am saying through the PhD Thesis. This is why it is so important to understand the structure of this work. I tried to make the text coincide with a gesture, as the translators into Spanish of the anonymous text *Appel* argued in their introduction to the pamphlet:

En 2003, el Llamamiento irrumpió en eso que algunos jamás han tenido vergüenza en denominar los 'medios politizados'. De ese pequeño libro marrón, sin mención de autor ni de edición, se lanzaron varios miles de ejemplares. Se puso mucho cuidado en que no circulase por los canales comerciales sino que se propagase a partir de espacios políticos y de mano en mano. No por un deseo de alimentar la fanfarronería del precio libre y de la sub-cultura, sino para que el texto coincidiese con un gesto; y para que cualquier lector pudiese responder al llamamiento. Si la difusión de este libro respondió a la necesidad de volver a plantear la cuestión de una estrategia revolucionaria victoriosa, al mismo tiempo suponía un medio de construir el partido aquí y ahora. Es únicamente bajo esta perspectiva que las difusiones alemana, portuguesa, inglesa, griega y ahora española, cobran sentido (Anonymous 2009, 27)

Making the text coincide with a gesture implies that there are no boundaries between theory and practice. Between what is said and what is made. This is why this PhD Thesis is both an object and a thought. And it is both at the same time.

7. TERMS/CONCEPTS

- **Conflict or occupation? Occupation or annexation? And what about resistance?** Concepts are not only artifacts for describing the world, but also epistemological weapons related to the ideological matrix of power. When I used the word *conflict* in order to analyze what happens in Palestine, some scholars that were committed to the Palestinian cause told me that I should not say the word *conflict* any longer: it is not a conflict –they maintained–,

it is an *occupation*. They thought that *conflict* was a too-soft term to describe *that* reality. Some books and articles, though, avoided the word *occupation* because it was too *hard* and they would rather use *annexation* to refer to the Palestinian question. In this PhD Thesis I try to articulate these three concepts: there is a conflict in Palestine, an unbalanced conflict, that is caused by the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Occupation itself is a strategy aimed to achieve two main goals: land dispossession and land annexation. Avoiding the word *conflict* here would imply that Palestinians are but passive victims with no agency at all. Avoiding the word *occupation* would imply a euphemization of the Palestinian question. I had the same problem with the word *resistance*. Some people that I interviewed did not like talking about resistance when describing their projects in Palestine because it endangered their work there. I decided to be extremely careful here and respect the terms each actor uses to describe his/her/its own existence.

- **Border, space, landscape, borderscape, borderlands, line, area, frontier architecture, atmosphere, wall, fence, barrier...:** So many concepts are used to describe and define the *border* because it does not consist of an only and exclusive mode of being. The border can be described as a line if we focus on its cartographic representation. The border is usually represented as a line on maps that distinguishes the *from-here* from the *until-here*. Looking at the border as an area, however, would allow us to theorize about the limits of the border. Does the border ends in the line? The border expands and it is present inside the territories not only on its peripheries. Looking at the border as an area is necessary in order to understand bordering structures that are built inside the countries such as the the Immigrant Detention Centers (Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros, CIEs) in Spain, for example. On the other hand, defining the border as a volume makes it possible to understand the material relationship between bodies and buildings, between bodies and walls. We can also define the border and the specific landscape a border produces (borderscape) as an atmospheric reality: the border touches the skin of bodies, bodies embody the wall, they inhale it. The border becomes a biopolitical tool that is not only a *physical* space, but also a social one.

The political borders cannot be separated from the economic borders. It is necessary to place the proliferation of walls and fences in its context. Walls are being built in order to make lines more visible and impregnable, but they are also being built with the aim of annexing certain territories or to manage space. The Israeli wall in the West Bank is not only used to separate and divide, but also (and principally) to annex more land, just in the same way how neoliberal strategies in urban areas are being designed with the aim of developing a process of gentrification and isolating the centers of cities that are meant only for tourists, elites and

business. Mauro Castro-Coma and Marc Marti-Costa in “Comunes urbanos: de la gestión colectiva al derecho a la ciudad” (2016) have compared this process of gentrification and touristification with the primitive accumulation of capital explained by authors such as Karl Marx or Silvia Federici. Primitive accumulation required taking communal lands and enclosing them, and this is what is nowadays happening in several neighbourhoods of many cities all over the world: “la estrategia de acumulación en el neoliberalismo y la forma rentista que adopta el beneficio bajo la hegemonía del capital financiero, se asemeja bastante al proceso de cercamiento o *enclosures* de los campos comunales decrito por Marx en el marco de lo que denomina 'acumulación primitiva'” (138). The border, then, has become a method for sociopolitical management as Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson explain in *Border as method, or, the multiplication of labor* (2013).

Finally, it is necessary to reflect on the colonial character of the contemporary process of building borders. Raji Batish describes this colonial strategy as a unilateral process that is being developed by white western powers and that does not only separate one space from the other, but also separate the North from the South:

فكما أنّ الهوية والحاجة لأن يُحدّد كل مرء ما هو وما هي هويته بالقياس لما هو مهيم، هي منتج ذكوريّ غربيّ، فإنّ الجدار أو الحاجز أو الحكر والإسمنت كموايد غير متفاعلة يمكن إدراجها تحت نفس التصنيف. فمن جدار برلين وجدران جنوب أفريقيا غير الفيزيائية، مروراً بجدار الفصل العنصريّ في فلسطين والجدار الذي بناه الأمريكان والذي يفصل بين أحياء الكاظمية والأعظمية في بغداد... الفكرة هي ذاتها، هم “هناك” ونحن “هنا”. فمن بيني الجدار هو ذاته من يُفترض أن “نعترف” أمامه بهويّتنا وذلك وفق نقطة قياسه وابتداءً من عنده، إذ أنّ الرجل الأبيض الذي يضع المقاييس والأبعاد وفوارق التوقيت ويحدّد الشمال كقيمة واتجاه أعلى والجنوب كاتجاه أسفل وأدنى، فإنه لا يملك هوية.. بمعنى أنّ هويته تساوي (0)، ومنها نبدأ بقياس هويّتنا والتصرّف وفقها، والأهمّ من ذلك عدم الحيادة بصدد ما بُني حولها من جدران

(Raji Bathish 2015)

- **Arts:** Defining the arts and the limits of the arts would be an infinite debate and would require the whole space of this PhD Thesis. I do not try to define what *art* is. I only share the reasons that made me include some practices in the *arts box*. What is art in this PhD Thesis? Almost everything that provides an aesthetic approach to the relationship with the border. The projects, artworks and collectives that are described imply a reflection on the relationship between border architecture and other objects: the body, a drawing, a poem... The process of deciding how to intervene in the wall or how to include a new object as part of its structure implies an aesthetic reflection. And this has something to do with the arts.

8. THE DRAMATURGY OF A CONSTELLATION: A CARTOGRAPHY FOR A PHD THESIS

This PhD Thesis is organized in eight chapters that can be related to Lefebvre's way of studying social space through the concepts of *social practice* –related to the quotidian use of space–, *representation of space* –related to the design of space, to architectural programs– and *representational space* –related to ideas and theories–.

- Chapter 1 is an introduction to theories and points of view that shape the perspective through which border spaces are studied. Thus, this chapter is related to the representational space.
- Chapters 2 and 3 develop the structure of the border in Palestine and Western Sahara. In chapter 2, I describe the architectural structure of borders, whereas in chapter 3, I describe the way how the border is rhetorically being built by analyzing political speeches delivered by different politicians, several articles published in newspapers and some interviews that I conducted. This way, I do not only approach the border as an architectural structure, but also as a linguistic landscape that produces a certain bordered subjectivity. These two chapters, then, are related to the study of the representations of space.
- Chapters 4 and 5 focus on artistic practice in border landscapes –in Palestine and Western Sahara–. In chapter 4, I analyze different objects –art events, art institutions and artworks–, whereas in chapter 5, I analyze my own experience as an artist in the aforesaid contexts. These two chapters are related to social practice.
- Chapter 6 includes a reflection on the different types of transformation and processes that artistic practice produces on border spaces –re-appropriation, re-existence, *destitution*, etc–.
- Finally, chapter 7 is dedicated to the development of the conclusions.
- References (placed at the end of the book) are organized in alphabetical order, without distinguishing between primary and secondary sources.

This PhD Thesis is also connected to the articles that I have been writing during this four-year researching period. These articles focus on border spaces as well, but they address the topic in a way that slightly differs from the perspective of this PhD Thesis. This is why, those articles complement this PhD Thesis –please, do not confuse this way of *writing/reading* the text that I propose and the compilation method used to write many PhD Thesis; this PhD Thesis is still a monograph despite the reading strategy that I suggest to the reader–. Thus, this *book*, this *text* can be read as a constellation that is interrelated to other materials:

- Blázquez Sánchez, Olga. 2018. "Palestina: ¿Es el Estado necesario? Posibilidades para ampliar los límites de la imaginación política." *Al Zeytun* 3. <http://alzeytun.org/palestina-estado-necesario-posibilidades-ampliar-los-limites-la-imaginacion-politica/>
- Blázquez Sánchez, Olga. 2018. "Collaborative Cartographies: Counter-Cartography and Mapping Justice in Palestine." *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies* 17(1): 75–85. DOI:10.3366/hpls.2018.0180.
- Blázquez Sánchez, Olga. 2017. "Climbing Walls to feel at Home: Palestinian Climbers reappropriating Space." *Revista de estudios internacionales mediterráneos* 22: 129-140. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15366/reim2017.22.006>

Finally, this PhD Thesis does not only mention texts that are *outside* its limits, but also texts that are *inside* it. There are constant and continuous references to a chapter or a section of a chapter. This way, the reader can go forward and backward in the process of reading.

9. LIMITS. WHAT THIS PHD THESIS DOES NOT DO/MAKE

Until now, I have described what I do/make through this PhD Thesis. I would also develop what some of the things that I do not do/make:

- This PhD Thesis does not belong to the social sciences, nor to the humanities, nor to the arts, but to the intersection between them.
- It is not a cultural approach, but an artistic one that does not focus on representation but on performativity.
- It is not an anthropological study –or not only–: even if it focuses on the production of space by taking many elements related to the human –social, cultural– dimension into account, the main goal is not to address the relationships between the human being and *the objects*, but to address the human being as one of the objects that is in relation to many others.
- It is an artistic approach to artistic practice, in which I try to highlight the epistemological dimension of the arts. Thus, it is not only a research on the arts, but also through the arts. The epistemological worthiness of artistic research is a debate and this PhD Thesis is an attempt to support the argument that one can produce knowledge by developing artistic practices. This is an example of practice-as-research, as some authors such as Robin Nelson calls it. I strongly recommend the reader to have a look at Nelson's article "Practice-as-research and the Problem of Knowledge" (2006) and Dieter Lesage's "Who's Afraid of Artistic Research? On measuring artistic research output" (2009) –an many other texts– in order to get an idea of the complexity that this debate implies.

- When talking about the architectural structure of borders, I do not focus on the consequences that it has on the different people that inhabit the territories where borders are placed: nomadic and sedentary communities, refugees, etc. However, the reader must be aware that these consequences are multiple and affect the different communities in many different ways. Again, delving into this topic would be a task for a different PhD Thesis.
- In chapter 4, I do not include the images of the artworks that I describe and analyze simply because they are easily accessible in the web-pages of the mentioned artists, collectives or platforms or simply by searching them in the internet. I did not want to appropriate the images, but to refer to them so that the reader can look for them.

When talking about the limits of a research, one also has to take into account that, as Jesús Ibáñez argues in *El análisis de la realidad social: Métodos y técnicas de investigación* (2002) “el sistema solo produce los datos que son funcionales para su supervivencia” (68). The world reproduces its own existence by providing the data that allows that re-production to be accomplished and, on the other hand, the researcher is not outside that world-system. Also as Jesús Ibáñez argues: “El investigador social forma parte de la sociedad que investiga, es un dispositivo autorreflexivo (un espejo) que la sociedad se pone [...]” (*ibid.*, 82). Thus, any researching process includes in its own existence the limits of itself. There is no researching process without limits.

Thus, any researching process implies limits and (re)productions.

CHAPTER 1: ON ARCHITECTURE'S PERFORMATIVITY AND NON-REPRESENTATIONAL LANDSCAPE

“La théorie n'a plus à connaître que ce qu'elle fait”

Guy Debord ¹

1. WHAT DOES *PERFORMATIVE ARCHITECTURE* MEAN?

Architecture has nothing to do with stillness and staticism. At least, this is the point of view of some architecture theorists such as Bernard Tschumi and Dorita Hannah, who have argued that architecture is, in fact, an event; or, in other words, something that happens in time. What is more, these authors do not only focus on the eventness of architecture, but also on its ability to perform, to do. Performativity makes architecture become an entity that does not merely *exist*, but that inevitably performs its own existence. Leatherbarrow summarizes this idea in “Architecture’s unscripted performance” (2005) when arguing that the change of perspective in the field of architecture produces a theoretical movement “from what the building *is* to what it *does*, defining the first by means of the second” (7). This point of view concerning architecture is intimately related to phenomenology, defined by Maurice Merleau-Ponty in *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962) as a philosophy that “puts essences back into existence, and does not arrive at an understanding of man and the world from any starting point other than that of their *facticity*” (vii). Phenomenological approaches to the understanding of the essence of things are very much concerned with the study of the superficial and perceptible appearance of the world, instead of its deepest and hidden mysteries. There is no essence without existence. There is no *being* without *phenomenon*. Phenomenology is “a philosophy for which the world is 'already there' before reflection begins” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, vii). Looking at architecture from a phenomenological perspective implies coming back to the perceptible surface of buildings, to the *facts* they allow to happen, the *facts* they embody and perform and the relationships they establish. This causes a rupture with other discourses about architecture, such as functionalism or structuralism, the main focus of which was on the purpose of the building and its underlying structure respectively. The *interior* of things is addressed in this PhD Thesis as a surface that happened to be folded—I refer here to the Deleuzian way of thinking about folds—. This does not deny that—maybe—the surface is not the existent thing (it does not exhaust the *being*), as Graham Harman argues when talking about the Object-Oriented Ontology in *Speculative realism. An introduction* (2018). Phenomenology is but a path to understand the dynamics of space from a relational point of view, which implies

¹ Debord, Guy. 2006. *La société du spectacle*. France: Infokiosque Nomade Editions Autonomes.

looking at how the surfaces of things affect each other.

This performative turn, nevertheless, is not exclusive of architecture. A reflection on the concept of performance has also taken place in the fields of linguistics (Noam Chomsky), gender studies (Judith Butler) or theater, among others. Performativity is a trendy concept. I am aware. I do not use it here because it is trendy, but because it is necessary. However, we must keep in mind that the concept is used in many different contexts and it implies plurivocity. In general, we can say, following Branko Kolarevic's article "Towards the performative in architecture" (2005), that "in the late 1950s, performance emerged in humanities" and "shifted the perception of culture as a static collection of artifacts to a web of interactions, a dynamic network of intertwined, multilayered processes that contest fixity of form, structure, value or meaning" (205). Performative architecture, then, is only one small thread that interacts, collides and coexist with all the other threads of the immense web of performativity theory (or theories).

And on top of this, *performativity* is a very vague, polysemic and complex term that has been developed in many different fields beyond humanities. This way, one can talk about the computer's performance, the dancer's performance or even the company's performance. The necessary question, then, is: what do all these *performances* have in common? A wide and general answer to this question would be that they all focus on the *doing*, on the dynamics of a given object that indeed, performs his/her/its own constituting acts. Judith Butler coined this concept of *constituting acts* to reflect on gender construction. In "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory" (1988), she argued that gender identity (for example, being a woman) is the result of the repetition and embodiment of a certain series of (constituting) acts. This way, one cannot say *I am a woman*, but *I am being a woman*, or better *I am embodying the constitutive acts that have traditionally been used to build a woman up*. In the same way, a computer, a dancer, a company or a building are constantly performing a certain series of acts that allow them to keep on being what they are and as they are.

Apparently, arguing that repetition is a characteristic of performative identities is a symptom of staticism. However, the repetition of constituting acts is a question of inertia or *habitus* (in terms of Bourdieu) or *conatus* (in terms of Spinoza), not a question of necessity. This means that acts can be repeated differently, or, in Butler's words, the possibilities of transformation "are to be found in the arbitrary relation between such acts, in the possibility of a different sort of repeating, in the breaking or subversive repetition of that style" (1988, 520). The word *style* is here referring to an amount of repetitive constituting acts that define a recognizable way of being. Taking into account Butler's statement, repetition includes in its own character the possibility of transformation and change.

This performative perspective through which space is analyzed in this PhD Thesis is also related

to a epistemological movement from representational to non-representational approaches. Thus, it has to be understood as a perspective intimately linked to Foucault's, Deleuze's or Derrida's theories as Alain Beaulieu maintains in *Cuerpo y acontecimiento. La estética de Gilles Deleuze* (2012). An explanation about non-representational theories will be provided at the end of this chapter.

In order to understand this performative turn, though, one must be aware of other approaches to architecture and to the arts in general. The most common approach to the understanding of any artistic object lies on an excessive importance given to *meaning* and *representation*. It seems as if the only task that one had to perform was to extract the hidden information from the artwork and its context in order to understand it properly. Indeed, the focus is always on the interpretative and communicative (and informative) dimension of an artwork, as if there was a message that had to be sent to the world. This is the perspective from which Hadeel Hadi Abdul Amir and Ghassak Hassan Muslim develop their article "التقنية والتواصل في الفن المعاصر" –“Technology and communication in contemporary art”– (2018) in which the authors argue that the arts are one of the main ways of communicating in any society (on page 1739): "ان الفن هو وليد المجتمع وانه احد وسائل الايصال فيه". The arts –which includes architecture– appear here as a means for delivering a message. After this statement, they also focus on semantics as the main field on which the arts are based. Nedjma Hadj Benchelabi in her conference “Entre reminiscencia y resiliencia, lenguajes corporales en Oriente Medio y el norte de África”, that took place in Teatros del Canal (Madrid), on January 26th, 2019, also develops a discourse on artistic practice in the MENA region that is full of concepts such as *meaning*. She talked about the *meaning* of actions carried out by different artists, even if she was apparently focusing on performativity. This implies there is an inertia to keep talking in representative-interpretative terms even when the objective seems to be headed towards avoiding representation. On the other hand, Azhar Badr Rishan focuses on experimentation in order to understand artistic practices and artworks in his article "التجريب التقني في الفن التشكيلي المعاصر" –“The Technical Experimentation in contemporary plastic arts”– (2016). Instead of focusing on semantics, meaning, representation and interpretation, he understands the arts through the concept of experimentation. This is also related to what Deleuze and Guattari argued in one of the chapters of *Mille Plateaux* (1980), entitled “28 novembre 1947 . Comment se faire un Corps sans Organes?” in which the authors ask the reader to move from interpretation to experimentation in order to develop a different way of relating to the world and understanding it: “Remplacez l'anamnèse par l'oubli, l'interprétation par l'expérimentation. Trouvez votre corps sans organes, sachez le faire, c'est question de vie ou de mort, de jeunesse et de vieillesse, de tristesse et de gaieté. Et c'est là que tout se joue” (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 187). The experience takes part in the performative turn since it focuses on the event, the happening, the doing instead on the essence, the interpretation, the representation, the meaning and the semantics. It is a movement from psychoanalysis to

schizoanalysis (concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *L'anti-Oedipe*, 1972) applied to the arts.

2. PERFORMATIVITY AND PROGRAMS

Paradoxically, this performative point of view concerning architecture, which implies the possibility of change and dynamism, does not deny the existence of a program, meaning a planning for the development of architectural structures. As Bernard Tschumi explains, there is “no architecture without program” (Tschumi 1996, 139). Thus, there is no architecture without a strategy to reach certain goals and there is no architecture without forecasting the expected future of a given architectural structure. However, Tschumi also stated that there is “no space without event” (*ibid.*). Events, in contrast to programmed realities, are related to uncertainty. As David Leatherbarrow argues: “Here we touch on an aspect of events that is essential –their unknowable beginnings and unexpected occurrence. When we use the expression ‘that was some event’, we acknowledge the unexpected quality of what occurred. We give such an experience the name event precisely because of the unforeseen character of what happened” (Leatherbarrow 2005, 11).

In fact, arguing that space, and the organization of space through architecture, is determined by both programs and events implies recognizing that *the expected*, defined by a program, as well as *the unexpected*, which was not defined by any program can happen. Programs, then, do not inevitably determine the development or behavior of a given building. One can talk about programs as purposes, intentions or even predictions that, nevertheless, are not necessarily to take place. One might better say that what programs actually do is to define the relationship between architectural structures and their creators or designers. In other words, programs are the manifestation of the strategies defined by those who want a given structure to become *alive*, those who want to produce and develop a new space in a certain way. As a consequence, architecture is placed in an in-between position defined by both the planned and the unplanned, which does not necessarily means that these two modes of being (the planned and the unplanned) are always equally distributed or equally likely to happen.

This (not necessary balanced) equilibrium between architecture's programmed or planned existence and its characteristic eventness or uncertainty is also produced by the interrelationship between buildings and the social context in which architectural structures take part. Architecture has a necessary effect or impact on society. But it also happens the other way around: society is able to produce an impact on architecture, too. Architecture is a human made (social) artifact that *does* or *causes* things, and these things caused by architecture are not isolated from social dynamics.

Architecture functions within society. It is, indeed, a social manifestation. There is a mutual codependency between architecture and society. Actually, there is no separation between architecture and society, and, if I am making the distinction between them it is just to problematize the question. The social space is made of architectural space: it is one of its many other ingredients. John Rajchman in *Constructions* (1998) describes the interaction between the two above-mentioned complementary modes of being (the planned and the unplanned; the expected and the unexpected) and the social dimension of architecture by addressing two new concepts, *effects* and *affects*:

We might distinguish between two kinds of spatial disposition, effective and affective. In the first, one tries to insert movements, figures, stories, activities into some larger organization that predates and survives them; the second, by contrast, seeks to release figures or movements from any such organization, allowing them to go off on unexpected paths or relate to one another in undetermined ways (Rajchman 1998, 91).

Based on Rajchman's argument, I have decided to draw two relation lines that connect his two concepts with the simultaneously planned / unplanned nature of architecture. This way, effects would be related to the expected / programmed character of architecture, whereas affects would be linked to its unexpected / eventual character. There are several reasons why these relation lines have been traced:

- The effective production of space, defined by Rajchman as the process by which the function designed for a given space prevails over its potentially alternative uses, is clearly related to the certainty that is expected of programs. A program is the illusion of a perfect prediction of future, the illusion of a perfect correspondence between what one wants something to be / to do and what it actually is / does.
- The affective production of space, defined by Rajchman as the process by which a given space allows free movements and events to take place, is, then, related to the unplanned and random development of this space.

Therefore, the effective organization of space would be defined by programs, whereas the affective organization of space is related to eventness and cannot be totally described by any program –although, the existence of social *habitus*² will make certain *random actions* become more possible than others–. From this point of view, society is intimately linked to both the affective production of space, and also to the effective production of space, since architecture is but a social practice that is related to both planning and programs and unexpected events. However, programs do not only belong to the designers of space (usually, institutional actors such as companies or states). Programs can also be developed with the aim of re-appropriating any architectural structure that has already been built following an institutional (one can also say *official*) program. I can also

2 Here I refer to Bourdieu's concept. The *habitus* can be defined or described as the social embodiment of historical patterns of doing and behaving.

reformulate the main goal of this PhD Thesis, that has already been described in the introduction, by saying that what I do is researching the way how some people design subversive architecture programs by developing artistic practices, which implies approaching the ability of some bodies to re-appropriate certain buildings (specifically, those buildings or architectural structures placed in border environments) by designing their own *unofficial* programs.

3. ARCHITECTURE PERFORMING VIOLENCE, BODIES PERFORMING RESISTANCE. IMBALANCE OF POWER AND POLITICS.

Although it has previously been said that the expected, namely the effective, and the unexpected, meaning the affective, are equally likely to happen, there is actually a factor that determines the (im)balance existing between these two categories. This factor is power. The expected effects are more likely to prevail since the building of architectural structures is normally planned by institutions, which are one of the the official residences of dominant power. On the other hand, unexpected affects are commonly developed by *the people*, those who have not enough power to officially design and build spaces and who receive, and sometimes react to, the effects produced by those spaces. Of course, here we encounter one of the main problems regarding the politics of space management: does not democracy allow civilians to inhabit government institutions and, therefore, to have enough power to design their own spaces? The point of departure of this thesis is that there is no democracy regarding the production of space. Although democracy allows civilians to elect their political representatives, it does not allow them to directly and actively design their spaces. Thus, the imbalance of power between institutions and *the people*, programs and events, effects and affects, is something that pierces the whole development of this PhD Thesis.

This discourse that is being developed which addresses various concepts such as power, society, architecture, performativity and politics requires answers to clarify certain questions. Some of these questions are:

- How can the imbalance of power existing between effects and affects be subverted for the sake of people's welfare?
- What does performative architecture really consist of? What does architecture actually do?

Let's first answer the second question: Bernard Tschumi in *Architecture and Disjunction* (1996) argues that architecture necessarily involves violence (Tschumi 1996, 121). This violence is not necessarily an aggressive one. "By 'violence', I do not mean the brutality that destroys physical or emotional integrity but a metaphor for the intensity of a relationship between individuals and their surrounding spaces" (*ibid.*, 122). He also distinguishes between two types of violence related to

architecture and space: the violence performed by bodies on space and the violence performed by space on bodies. The first one is mainly a violation of the serene aesthetics of architecture. Tschumi argues that the simple presence of an external body in a building is violent. “The body disturbs the purity of architectural order” (*ibid.*, 123). On the other hand, there is also a violence that is performed by space on bodies. This type of violence can easily become a strategy of torture. “Violence exercised by and through space is spatial torture” (*ibid.*, 124). The most important thing here is that architecture does not require a specific design to become violent. Any architectural structure is *already* violent. It does not matter whether a building has been built with the explicit objective of producing violence or not. Architecture is to some degree intrinsically violent since it imposes certain spatial structures and, therefore, determines and constrains the possibilities of movement and inhabiting. The violence of architecture comes from architecture's performative character itself. It is architecture's ability of doing things, namely its agency, what makes buildings become violent.

From Tschumi's point of view, then, there is violence in both sides: the violence of bodies and the violence of architecture. However, “what must first be determined is whether this relation between action and space is symmetrical -opposing two camps (people versus spaces) that affect one another in a comparable way -or asymmetrical, a relation in which one camp, whether space or people, clearly dominates the other” (*ibid.*, 122). What is in this thesis argued is that there is an obvious imbalance between architecture and bodies. Architecture programs are mostly designed by official institutions and they are executed in such a way that it is very difficult for any body to resist them. The violence of architecture, then, automatically places us, as bodies, in a vulnerable position. We are vulnerable bodies that negotiate movement and mobility in a context of power imbalance. Judith Butler has also reflected on this concept of vulnerability and its relationship with performativity. As explained by Butler in her lecture “Violence and Resistance”, which took place at REDCAT (Los Angeles) on March 4th, 2015, vulnerability, contrary to what one might be used to thinking about it, is not only a state of risk and passiveness, but also an opportunity to resist and to act.

This perspective about vulnerability provides us with a clue to find an answer to the first question above. The imbalance of power between effects and affects makes bodies become inevitably vulnerable. However, this vulnerability is not only produced by the existence of an imbalance of power. Vulnerability is always there. It belongs to us as human beings that depend on what Butler calls infrastructures. These infrastructures can be human relationships, environment, social structures, institutions, etc. Of course, one of these infrastructures is also space. Space includes architecture, the landscape surrounding us, the air we breath, etc. Space is then one of our main supports, an essential aspect of reality that life requires in order to be livable, it is a condition

for existence. If space is necessary for existence to happen and develop, then, analyzing the way space is organized is crucial to understand *how* existence is developed.

Architecture implies violence just as life and existence implies vulnerability. It seems that this precarious situation does not allow any possibility of resistance or subversion. However, vulnerable bodies can use their own vulnerable exposure to violence as a strategy of resistance. Resistance, then, does not only consist of becoming stronger than the structure that is being resisted, but of showing the body's weakness just in front of power apparatuses. It is in fact the vulnerability of bodies which makes them resistant as well as damageable. Vulnerability, from Butler's point of view, is something placed between passiveness and action, something that includes in its own character the necessity of being affected by architecture and also the possibility of affecting architecture. Thus, vulnerability can produce strategies to resist, subvert and even re-appropriate architectural structures.³

Beyond vulnerability, resistance can also be developed by other ways. It has been previously said that any architectural structure is intrinsically violent because it constrains movements. Well, it is true, but only partially. Architecture implies a constriction since it makes certain kind of movements become impossible, but, at the same time, any architectural structure also becomes a source of inspiration for new and creative ways of moving to arise. In other words, architecture provides an opportunity for both resistance and re-appropriation. Any building includes in its own structure and design an amount of performances that it can produce but also an amount of performances that can be produced upon it. As Butler argued in her lecture, any body, or structure, can act but it can also be acted upon. Therefore, architecture does not merely *do*, but it is also *done*. Architecture performativity allows both effects and affects to happen.

Léopold Lambert in *Weaponized Architecture* (2012) also addresses the ability of bodies to take advantage of architectural structures in order to perform resistance. Lambert, reminding us the words of the Iranian author Reza Negarestani in his *Cyclonopedia*, names this process of taking advantage of structures in order to perform resistance as “sympathy with the obstacle” (Lambert 2012, 170). Reaching a certain degree of sympathy with the obstacle implies looking at architecture not only from a passive point of view, meaning from the perspective of a victim that is affected by architecture, but mainly as an agent that can affect the obstacle in order to have an effect on it. Lambert compares this process with *parkour*, an activity that indeed consists of using “each obstacle as a paradoxal opportunity of movement” (*ibid.*).

Finally, resistance can also be performed by simply inhabiting forbidden spaces. If one is not allowed to enter a certain space, then, the simply act of stepping into that space becomes, at some

³ I talk about resistance and re-appropriation together although I am aware that they are not synonyms. This PhD Thesis focuses on re-appropriation, which is sometimes (but not always) developed as a strategy for resistance. However, re-appropriation can also be an objective itself.

degree, an act of resistance. If movement is not allowed in a certain space, then, the simply act of walking becomes a type of resistance. Performing resistance does not necessarily imply the development of aggressive, meaning explicitly violent, strategies. To describe this situation it would be interesting to use one of Eyal Weizman's concepts, developed in his book *Hollow Land. Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (2007). This concept is *low-intensity conflict*. Sometimes, the relationship between architecture and bodies takes the shape of a low-intensity conflict, meaning that violence as well as resistance are not so clearly perceptible or noticeable, which does not mean that this kind of conflicts are less important or devastating.

Performativity and eventness inevitably place architecture in society. As Tschumi argues “the definition of architecture as simultaneously space and event brings us back to political concerns, or more precisely, to the question of space as related to social practice” (Tschumi 1996, 23). Thus, it is not possible to simply talk about architecture's performativity. Performativity exists as long as those performances performed by architecture have an effect on the social environment or the community, a broad concept that does not only include human being's concerns. “Space always marks the territory, the milieu of social practice” (*ibid.*), which means that the organization of space also defines or determines how social practice will develop, and the other way around. Architecture, then, becomes a question of politics since decisions regarding spatial structure are to be done in a sociopolitical environment and these sociopolitical decisions will have an inevitable impact on sociopolitical dynamics.

These politics of architecture are less related to institutional or high-level political forums than to bodies. The politics of architecture are down to earth, meaning that they mainly belong to the relationship between space and the flesh. And there is no hierarchical relationship between these two actors. As argued by Omar Khan and Dorita Hannah in “PERFORMANCE/ARCHITECTURE. An interview with Bernard Tschumi” (2008), “the movement of bodies in space was just as important as space itself” (53). The politics of architecture, then, are just here with us.

4. LANDSCAPE: SPACE IS BROAD

We have already talked about architecture and its performative character. However, architecture is not the only category that is going to be developed in this PhD Thesis. Here, I would like to provide an approach to *space* from non-representational theory, which will be considered not only as a perspective –meaning an analytical tool (or frame) for looking to, describing and understanding the world–, but also a productive one: a tool/frame that produces the world. Non-representational theory –or theories– causes a change in the way we look at and relate to the world since it highlights

the dynamic character of things. That is why the importance given to terms such as *landscape* or *event* is crucial. The concept of event has already been developed in previous sections. Now, I am going to focus on describing how non-representational theory works, as well as the changes it produces in the concept of landscape. This section is placed here, after having developed the previous ones, because it is important to contextualize the performative turn inside the non-representational turn in order to understand the way I approach not only architecture, but also space—in a more broad sense—in this PhD Thesis. This reflection about non-representational theory comes from a long process of looking at space, a process that started in 2014 with an essay entitled “Space is happening” that I wrote while I was studying at Utrecht University (doing a MA Theatre Studies).

There are several consequences that the application of the non-representational theory implies: “The first one is the redefinition of space and its relationship with time. The second one is the dehierarchization of the elements within reality (and therefore the non-anthropocentric perspective on space). The third consequence is the political implications in considering movement and time (and the combination of both named rhythm) as characteristics of space” (Blázquez Sánchez 2014, 2). The change from a representational to a non-representational theory implies that the world is not an object anymore, but an *object-ing*, the object is in constant movement and it cannot be analyzed without taking into account the mutant or variant character of any entity and the relationships of the entity with its surroundings. Nigel Thrift, in *Non-representational theory: Space, politics, affect* (2008), explains that: “Non-representational theory takes the leitmotif of movement and works with it as a means of going beyond constructivism” (5).

The non-representational theory also implies a performative turn since it “privileges play” (Thrift 2008, 7). Playing does not only require rules, which can be understood as the plan—or what Bernard Tschumi would call *the program*—, but also a practice. Performing the game includes both the rules and the practice: “The game requires its actualization in the world by actively playing it. A game, then, does not exist without the *doing*. Rules do not bring the game into existence. However, the game can neither exist without rules” (Blázquez Sánchez 2014, 4). The distinction between the *doing*, the rules and practice can be somehow confusing here. My objective is not to produce a clear distinction between these three concepts, since all of them are interrelated. They do not refer to different realities, but—maybe—to different faces or stages of the same world. The rules—the planning, the program—are part of the *doing*, there is a productive character in theory. Distinguishing between theory and practice would be a mistake if one wants to understand this performative and non-representational turn. The focus on movement and dynamism has caused a proliferation of terms that refer to space. Omar Khan and Dorita Hannah gather many of these terms in their article “Performance/Architecture” appeared in the *Journal of Architectural Education*

(2008): event, mobile space, spacing, spatial acting, architectural performativity, space as practiced place, ephemeral structures, etc.

The concept of landscape, as well as the concept of event, is key in order to understand space as an inter-relational and dynamic place. The history of landscape is long:

If we look back on the history of landscape, we become aware that this concept has been used in many different fields such as geography, ecology, painting or photography among others. Firstly, landscape was used as a representation or as a description, especially in the fields of geography and painting. In the chapter “A brief history of landscape research” which has been included in *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* edited by Peter Howard, Ian Thompson, and Emma Waterton (2013), Marc Antrop notices that “after the Second World War, landscape research was still mainly descriptive” (15). It implies that the non-representational uses of landscape would not appear until the second half of the last century. During all this period before the fifties, representational landscape was mostly associated to the sense of sight. Landscape existed so that we could look at it from outside with “detachment and overseership” (Howard, Thompson and Waterton 2013, 120) (Blázquez Sánchez 2014, 5 – 6).

As time went by, landscape has been defined both as the object that is seen (representational approach) and as the combination of the observed object, the observation and the observer (non-representational approach). This second approach places landscape in a inter-relational and dynamic context. However, it does not deny that representation still plays an important role. The fact that landscape includes in its own practice the observer, the action of observing and being observed (the object) implies that there is no space without (human) interpretation: the creation of the outside is determined by the inside (human subjectivities) and vice versa. Interpretation, though, is not the main category through which space is going to be analyzed. The main concepts that will be applied are *performativity*, *production* and *event*. The goal is not to provide a description of borders in order to *interpret* them, but to address the baroque complexity that they embody, which implies a structure that is full of folds. This implies something more besides a descriptive and interpretative task

The concept of landscape also allows for an expansion of space. Looking at space through the concept of landscape makes it possible for space to become wider. This way, space is not a category or a physical entity anymore, but a web of physical, social, economic, political, affective, emotional interrelationships. This PhD Thesis focuses on one specific type of space: border spaces. Applying the concept of landscape to the way we look at borders and frontier architectural structures implies defining them as areas instead of lines. Or even as volumes and atmospheres. They are not limits or entities that separate or divide one part from another, but places where life is developed.

The concept of landscape also includes in its definition the social dimension of space, which is also present in the way I develop the analysis through these pages and which helps enormously to understand how space happens. As Lefebvre argues, space is always produced. This is how it comes into being. This does not mean that there is a clear producer and that one can easily identify the

ones that build space. The fact that space is produced means that it is constantly being constructed. There is no moment in which space is complete, done, finished. The social space is a perpetual process of production and reproduction of structures, discourses, practices, subjectivities, objects, affects... Thus, a general definition of space that can be useful to understand this PhD Thesis could be: a socially produced event that is always happening –being produced–.

Finally, beyond the concept of landscape, there are also other concepts to look at space such as *atmosphere*: landscape is not only the *picture* we imagine when thinking about space, it is also what is touching our bodies, what we breathe. It implies contact, as Léopold Lambert argues in “L’architecture comme atmosphère” (2018). And this atmospherization of space is the point of departure that will make it possible to talk about artistic practice on borders as an activity that necessarily implies contact and the body (its skin, its parts, its flesh). On the other hand, Agamben, in the eighth chapter of his book *L’uso dei corpi. Homo Sacer, IV, 2* (2014), entitled “L’inappropriabile”, develops the difference between the *surroundings*, the *world* and the *landscape*. The world appears as long as the animal distances itself from the surroundings –which makes it become a human–, and the landscape appears as long as the human distances itself from the world. The world is a deactivation of the surroundings and the landscape is the deactivation of the world; thus, the landscape is a deactivation of a deactivation. These three concepts – surroundings, world, landscape– are spatial categories that point to the relationship of the body with everything else and even with itself. The body, then, becomes part of that *else*, it is but an element of space. The artistic practices that are going to be analyzed in this PhD Thesis develop different ties to space and they also become part of that space, they become one of the processes in the production of space. As it has already been argued, space never stops: space only appears as a motionless entity if one looks at it as a residue of the process of producing space⁴. Space, then, is approached in this PhD Thesis as a process of production, not as a place.

5. SOCIAL SPACE

Space is not an abstract category. It is common to think about space as an empty container where things occur, as an abstract and absolute condition that needs to be *there* in order to affirm the existence of the world. However, space, as it has been conceptualized by authors such as Henri Lefebvre or Pierre Bourdieu is socially and historically developed. It is a socio-historical condition, not an abstract one. Both Bourdieu and Lefebvre –despite the differences in their approaches to the concept– argue that social space conditions and is conditioned by social practice.

Lefebvre also criticizes the arguments that place the concept of space in the natural field, as if

⁴ Agamben develops this argument in the “Intermezzo I” of the book *L’uso dei corpi. Homo Sacer, IV, 2* (2014) when reflecting on Foucault’s definition of the subject, that is but the residue of a continuous process of subjectivation.

space was linked to Nature and, consequently, to the origins of the History. Relating space to Nature would imply that space had a natural phase that was followed by a social one: first it was Nature, and then societies arrived to inhabit the former natural space. This is why the author warns the reader: “A social space is not a socialized space” (Lefebvre 1991, 190). This means that:

To hold, for example, that natural space, the space described by the geographer, existed as such and was then at some point socialized leads either to the ideological posture of nostalgic regret for a space that is no longer, or else to the equally ideological view that this space is of no consequence because it is disappearing. In reality, whenever a society undergoes a transformation, the materials used in the process derive from another, historically (or developmentally) anterior social practice. A purely natural or original state of affairs is nowhere to be found (*ibid.*).

However, Lefebvre is also aware of the limitations that a pure historical approach to space would imply. This is why he also says that “a social space cannot be adequately accounted for either by nature (climate, site) or by its previous history. Nor does the growth of the forces of production give rise in any direct causal fashion to a particular space or a particular time” (*ibid.*, 77). Thus, even if any social space is historically determined, the particular history that is linked to a particular place is not a *fatum*, meaning a written destiny. Space is not purely natural, nor purely social and nor even purely historical, but it is all of them at the same time: it is being produced by historical, social and natural forces.

Finally, Lefebvre also reflects on some of the characteristics of space. He criticizes the image of space as a discontinuous thing that can be cut and divided:

Social spaces interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves upon one another. They are not things, which have mutually limiting boundaries and which collide because of their contours or as a result of inertia. Figurative terms such as 'sheet' and 'stratum' have serious drawbacks: being metaphorical rather than conceptual, they assimilate space to things and thus relegate its concept to the realm of abstraction. Visible boundaries, such as walls or enclosures in general, give rise for their part to an appearance of separation between spaces where in fact what exists is an ambiguous continuity (Lefebvre 1991, 86-87)

This distinction between continuity and discontinuity is key in order to understand how the type of landscapes –borderscapes– that will be studied in this PhD Thesis work.

In contrast to Lefebvre's point of view, Pierre Bourdieu does give prominence to historicity when he conceptualizes social space. Bourdieu places the concept in the social sphere first: “[...] the social space is defined by the mutual exclusion, or *distinction*, of the positions which constitute it, that is, as a structure of juxtapositions of social positions (themselves defined, as we shall see, as positions in the structure of distribution of the various kinds of capital)” (Bourdieu 1997, 134); and then he translates it into space: “social space tends to be translated, with more or less distortion, into physical space, in the form of a certain arrangement of agents and properties” (*ibid.*).

The social world is the result of a process of incarnation of history in things (social space) and a process of incarnation of history in bodies (what Bourdieu calls *habitus*). These two histories are

interrelated (*ibid.*, 150-151). This idea developed by Bourdieu allows us to talk about a new actor that appears on scene: the body. When I talk about the body in this PhD Thesis I do not only refer to a physical (or physiological) entity. Bourdieu's places the body in the social arena. The habitus is the way of doing of the body that is determined by the historical development of the social forces. This does not mean, again, that bodies are programmed, but that they follow certain dispositions that have been socially distributed and are related to certain social positions. The habitus is what makes a body know how to behave: "Each agent has a practical, bodily knowledge of her present and potential position in the social space, a 'sense of one's place' as Goffman puts it [...]" (*ibid.*, 184).

For his part, Lefebvre coined the concept of *spatial body*:

When the body came up earlier on in our analysis, it did not present itself either as subject or as object in the philosophical sense, nor as an internal milieu standing in opposition to an external one, nor as a neutral space, nor as a mechanism occupying space partially or fragmentarily. Rather, it appeared as a 'spatial body'. A body so conceived, as produced and as the production of a space, is immediately subject to the determinants of that space: symmetries, interactions and reciprocal actions, axes and planes, centres and peripheries, and concrete (spatiotemporal) oppositions. The materiality of this body is attributable neither to a consolidation of parts of space into an apparatus, nor to a nature unaffected by space which is yet somehow able to distribute itself through space and so occupy it. Rather, the spatial body's material character derives from space, from the energy that is deployed and put to use there (Lefebvre 1991, 195).

The spatial body participates in the production of space not only as an agent that voluntarily affects space, but also –and principally, I would say– as a productive force among other productive forces. Social space, then, would be the result of the tensions that the different productive forces produce.

6. OTHER REFERENCES ON SPACE

Despite the fact that their theories and concepts are not specifically developed in this PhD Thesis and that they are not specifically quoted in this pages, the ideas of urbanists such as Jane Jacobs or Sharon Zukin, and other authors that have also reflected on space and urbanism, such as Miguel Amorós, are also somehow present since they provided me with a training in the way of looking at space. Thus, Jane Jacobs, Sharon Zukin and Miguel Amorós are present not as authorities whose words are quoted, but as authors whose practices are applied to the development of this research and accompany this research.

PART 2: BORDERSCAPES

CHAPTER 2: LANDSCAPES OF BORDERLANDS

*“Rien n'est plus matériel, rien n'est plus physique,
plus corporel que l'exercice du pouvoir.”*

Michel Foucault¹

The main aim in writing this chapter is to provide a wide picture of how walls are currently being developed. The focus is on analyzing the Israeli wall in Palestine (West Bank) and the Moroccan wall in Western Sahara. However, at the end of the chapter, there is also a reflection on the structure of many other contemporary walls that have been recently built or somehow updated. The objective is to approach these borderlands and borderscapes from the perspective of performative architecture and the concepts of *eventness* and *production of space* in order to understand the way frontier architecture works.

This PhD Thesis does not only focuses on walls as its object of study, I would like to raise awareness about the importance of looking at these architectural structures only as one part of the border. The wall, as argued by Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson in *Border as Method, or the Multiplication of Labor* (2013) is not a synonym of the border, but only one of its many possible components. Yet an important one: “[...] we are convinced that the image of the border as a wall, or as a device that serves first and foremost to exclude, as widespread as it has been in recent critical studies, is misleading in the end. Isolating a single function of the border does not allow us to grasp the flexibility of this institution” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 7). However, Mezzadra and Neilson's attempt to “separate the border from the wall” (*ibid.*, 8) is only interesting in a theoretical level, since it would be impossible to differentiate one from the other in a context such as the West Bank in Palestine or Western Sahara. It is neither possible nor fair to imagine the border without a wall (and many other border and occupation architectural structures) in these two contexts. On the other hand, we are witnessing an increase of the number of fences and walls in western countries as well as an increase in the number of official discourses supporting this construction of walls to *fight* against immigration and to manage the refugee crisis that can not be ignored. There is a *wallification* of the border taking place. On the other hand, Mezzadra and Neilson's position against the simplification of the border that the prominence of the image of the wall implies is due to their simplified perspective concerning a structure such as the wall. The wall does not only produce and perform exclusion, as they argue. The design and management of space by building walls lead to the accomplishment of many other objectives, as it will be explained. The current importance of

1 Foucault, Michel. 1975. “Le pouvoir et le corps.” *Quel corps?* 2, 2-5.

walls is the reason why this specific architectural structure is sometimes mentioned in this PhD Thesis metonymically to refer to the border itself and its multiple structures. The wall-border is seen as a complex structure the function of which cannot be simplified. There is a huge political and social range of factors and functions that the wall-border embodies and performs. Thus, the frontier is not only *the wall*, but, we have to understand that the wall is not only *a wall*. Border landscapes are complex and this chapter is an attempt to address this complexity.

The multiplication of walls has implied two main consequences regarding the way of talking about borders:

- As Said Saddiki argues in *World of Walls. The Structure, Roles and Effectiveness of Separation Barriers* (2017): “This increase in physical-border barriers contradicts the trend for some globalist and trans-national perspectives that envisage a 'Borderless World', 'A World without Sovereignty', 'The End of Geography', 'The End of the Nation-State' and so on” (Saddiki 2017, 1).
- On the other hand, this proliferation of physical walls and fences has caused the development of many discourses against borders. However, Régis Debray in *Éloge des Frontières* (2010) problematizes this question. He argues that these discourses are based on the idea that the world would be a better place without borders: “une idée bête enchante l’Occident: l’humanité, qui va mal, ira mieux sans frontières.” (Debray 2010, 11). The debate takes place both in the field of political speech and the field of political action. “Pendant que le mantra *déterritorialisation*, quoique difficile à prononcer, résonne en maître dans nos colloques, le droit international 'territorialise' la mer –l’*ex-res nullius*– en trois zones distinctes (eaux territoriales, zone contiguë et zone économique exclusive)” (*ibid.*, 20). There is a continuous process of borderization (territorialization) despite the anti-border (deterritorialization) discourses and practices .

In order to develop his argument about the border, Debray starts by talking about the skin. The skin is what separates one body from the other, but it is also the interface that makes it possible for bodies to touch each other. The skin is an interface. This is closely linked to the argument developed by Paola Suárez Ávila in “Arte y cultura en la frontera. Consideraciones teóricas sobre procesos culturales recientes en Tijuana” (2007), where she explains that “la frontera norte de México también evoca, en el imaginario colectivo de los mexicanos, la proximidad con Estados Unidos” (Suárez Ávila 2007, 29). Thus, the border does not only imply separation (or distance), but also proximity. This is what makes the question of borders complex. The conclusion is that, claiming for a borderless world can also be analyzed as an illusion that has been created thanks to the development of certain devices (mobile phones, computers, internet, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter,

etc), but the fact that there is connectivity does not mean there is collectivity. The nomadic subject is a symbol that has also been developed inside the capitalist system itself. Therefore, the image of a borderless world is not necessarily a liberating metaphor. In this PhD Thesis the border is not described as the *bad tool* that has to be erased from the surface of the Earth, but as an architectural structure that exists, that is already there and that is inhabited, resisted, experienced, re-appropriated by bodies. The analysis does not begin from the illusion of a hypothetical borderless world, but from the acknowledgment that there are borders and that they are increasingly being embodied by walls and performing violence.

Finally, and before analyzing the walls of Palestine and Western Sahara, I would like to define some concepts:

- **Border and frontier:** Even though Mazzadra and Neilson (2013) argue that there is a clear semantic difference between these two words, in the English Cambridge Dictionary both of them appear as concepts that refer either to a line that separates two areas, or as an edge. Differences between the two concepts are related to the way they are understood as edges. The border is the “line around the edge of something”², whereas the frontier is the line “between a known area and an unknown or wild area”³, which means the frontier is at the edge of the world –that is to say, the territories known and defined by those who arrive to the(ir) unknown –. The known and the unknown (the civilized and the wild) are situated concepts the meaning of which is always defined by those in power. Border and frontier are used interchangeably despite the differences in their meaning. What is important in relation to the semantics of these two concepts is that they refer to space as well as to the ontological structure of reality: the border and the frontier divide spaces and they also demarcate the edge of the being (the known, the civilized). Sahrawis and Palestinians, then, can be understood as bodies that are ontologically and spatially put in a place that lies beyond the edge, beyond what Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls the *abyssal line*.
- **Borderlands:** I take the term *borderlands* from the book written by Gloria E. Anzaldúa and entitled *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987). This concept makes it possible to think the border as an area or a volume or an atmosphere instead of a line, as a space that is inhabited, walked and suffered by bodies.
- **Borderscape:** The concept of landscape refers both to what is seen and the perspective from which it is seen. The landscape addresses both the seen and the sight. The borderscape is the specific landscape produced by the border. I also take the concept from Suvendrini Perera's article “A Pacific Zone? (In) Security, Sovereignty, and Stories of the Pacific Borderscape”

2 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-portuguese/border>. Last accessed, April 26th, 2019.

3 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-portuguese/frontier>. Last accessed, April 26th, 2019.

(2007), where the author addresses the complexity and hybridism of the Pacific area by analyzing it through the concept of *borderscape*.

If I pay attention to the words used to talk about the border is because the border itself has become a complex environment that does many things. As Mezzadra and Neilson argue: “To analyze the pervasive character of the border’s operations –let alone the marked violence that accompanies them– we need a more complex and dynamic conceptual language than that which sustains images of walls and exclusion” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 7). Walls and exclusion are inherent components of the border, but they are not the only ones. This is why we need more words to describe and analyze borders.

The complexity of borders, however, does not only arise from its structure and functions, but also from its history. As Balibar argues in one of the chapters of *Politics and the Other Scene* (2002) entitled “What is a border?”: “[...] we cannot attribute to the border an essence which would be valid in all places and at all times, for all physical scales and time periods, and which would be included in the same way in all individual and collective experience” (Balibar 2002, 75) because “borders have a history; the very notion of border has a history. And it is not the same everywhere and at every level” (*ibid.*, 77). This point of view is related to the prominence that Bourdieu gave to historicity in order to understand any social space –explained in the previous chapter of this PhD Thesis–.

Finally, and before delving into the analysis of border spaces, I would like to do two last clarifications: it is obvious that there is a close relationship between the Market (with capitals) and the construction of walls. There are companies that build the different components used to make walls and there is a business that depends on the borderization of the world: “The growth in border barriers all over the world has created a huge security business” (Saddiki 2017, 5):

The major international companies that claim the lion share of this market include Boeing (American multinational aerospace and defense corporation), Elbit Systems (Israeli defense electronics manufacturers and integrators), Magal Security Systems (Israeli company operating in more than 75 countries worldwide), Amper (Spanish multinational group), Indra Sistemas (Spanish information technology and defense company) and EADS Group (European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company) (*ibid.*).

I do not analyze these links between the design of border spaces and the Market in this PhD Thesis. I only focus on the spatial structure of borderlands. It is necessary to mention this dimension of borders, though, in order to become aware of the limits of this PhD Thesis.

The second clarification that I wanted to do is that I do not provide any picture of the walls simply because during the analysis of walls, I refer to different scholars, architects and soldiers that have been working on the description and representation of walls for a long time. I refer to their works also as the sources where to find graphic data –also because most of the authors I quote have

access to the means and have the knowledge to produce a wide range of representations of borders that I lack—. My task here is not to repeat what they have already done, but to gather their points of view together and provide a wide picture of what borders look like today. I try to understand the processes that these walls perform. Indeed, the objective is to approach the architectural structure of borders by applying the architectural analysis of authors that are architects themselves or the work of whom consists of designing spaces.

1. WEST BANK – PALESTINE

The way of working of the different mechanisms and devices that constitute the whole apparatus called *architecture of occupation*, developed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories specially since 1967, has been accurately described by several authors such as Eyal Weizman, Alessandro Petti or Léopold Lambert, among others. The objective of this section is not to delve deeper into this subject, but to provide a quick look at the main elements and processes that take part in this architectural machinery in order to understand the landscape dynamics of this particular border-environment by taking into account its colonial essence, as Hatem Bazian has proved in his book *Palestine... "it is something colonial"* (2016). Bazian explains the way the Zionist project included a colonial point of view regarding the Palestinian land from the beginning, which implied ethnic cleansing, land dispossession, population transfer, change of the name of places, demographic strategies, etc.

The “Fragmented Lives. Humanitarian Overview 2015” report, published in June 2016 by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the occupied Palestinian territories (OCHA), shows how physical obstacles (checkpoints, israeli-only roads, walls...) and also bureaucratic obstacles (administrative requirements, permits...) imposed by Israel in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank remain the cause of systematic violations of Palestinians' rights to movement and access to the land and all its resources (hospitals, schools...). On the one hand, Gaza continues to be the biggest prison in the world with no control over its borders, its territorial waters and its airspace. On the other hand, living in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) implies facing continuous and daily interruptions in movement. Through this chapter, the focus is on analyzing the way the architecture of occupation functions only in the West Bank. This decision has been taken because of two main reasons:

- The necessity of narrowing down the research so that it becomes achievable. The political situation and the social and architectural context in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are different, so it is possible to study them separately. The Gaza Strip can be (and it has

actually been) blocked, it can be closed. The border there has its own specific dynamics that differ from those in the West Bank.

- The tremendous diversity of architectural strategies currently developed in the West Bank as part of the Israeli occupation objective. The West Bank has become a laboratory for the development and implementation of a vast diversity of architectural and border devices.

However, it is necessary to become aware that “the [Israeli] separation-barrier strategy has been a key element in the construction of the Israeli state” (Sddiki 2017, 35) and that, even if the focus of this PhD Thesis is on the West Bank, one must understand that the Palestinian region has been densely bordered as a consequence of the creation of the state of Israel:

[There are] three categories of barriers based on their geographical location: separation barriers in the occupied Palestinian territories (barriers separating Israelis from Palestinians and barriers separating Palestinians from each other), barriers as de facto borders between Israel and Arab countries and Israeli military barriers in other occupied Arab territories (e.g., in Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula and the Syrian Golan Heights) (*ibid.*, 10-11).

Another decision was also not to include the study of the architecture of the Palestinian refugee camps –neither the Sahrawi refugee camps–, in this chapter since they are not part of the architecture of occupation itself but –perhaps⁴– of the architecture of resistance and/or resilience and they would be therefore better analyzed in a specific study. However it is interesting to introduce some of the main characteristics of this architecture of refugee camps. In their book *Architecture after Revolution* (2013), Alessandro Petti, Sandi Hilal and Eyal Weizman already reflected on the architectural structure of these spaces and how they sometimes become a “twisted mirror image of a lost geography” (Petti, Hilal and Weizman 2013, 43), meaning they somehow resemble the original cities of Palestine that refugees were once forced to abandon. The architecture of refugee camps, then, should be understood as a consequence of the Israeli occupation and the refugee policies of the host regions and countries but also as traces of memories. In Western Sahara, the situation is similar, since the refugee camps of Tindouf take the names of cities placed in the western occupied territories. Thus, there is *something* in the structure of these refugee camps that is also related to borders.

In this chapter, the Israeli architecture of occupation in the West Bank is addressed by focusing on four of its elements: a) its devices, meaning “the Separation Barrier, the IDF checkpoints, the Israeli civil settlements, the Israeli exclusive axis of transportation and the Area [C] in which the army has full power” (Lambert 2012, 67), b) the processes these devices produce, c) the architectural strategies developed by Israel and d) the metaphors used by some authors to understand the way space is organized in the West Bank:

4 I say *perhaps* here because the architecture of refugee camps could also be categorized under many other different labels –related to other perspectives–, such as *architecture of survival*, or *architecture of reintegration*.

➔ DEVICES

The Separation Barrier

This device has been named differently by different authors: the Separation Barrier, the Apartheid Wall, the Wall, the wall... In Arabic, we also find different ways of naming it: الجدار العازل (insulation/separation wall), الجدار الفاصل (separation wall), الجدار الإسرائيلي (Israeli wall), الجدار الإسرائيلي العنصري (Israeli racist/apartheid wall), جدار الفصل الإسرائيلي (Israeli separation wall). Here I refer to it as the Separation Barrier because of:

- **Its miscellaneous style:** It is not only a wall, but a complex structure made of “8-metre-high concrete slabs, electronic fences, barbed wire, radar, cameras, deep trenches, observation posts and patrol roads” (Weizman 2007, 161).
- **Its function as a segregation tool** for separation and movement control of Palestinians.

The building process of the Separation Barrier started in June 2002 as a way to avoid the attacks coming from the Palestinian territory, according to the Israeli official discourse. So, from the Israeli point of view, it was a necessary security measure to protect the Israeli civil population. However, as Eyal Weizman has proved, there was no actual building planning for the barrier. During the construction process, the Separation Barrier “was continuously deflected and reoriented, repeatedly changing its route along its length” (*ibid.*, 162). So, despite the existence of an official objective in building it (providing security), there was in fact no construction planning. This apparently random and chaotic building process also betrayed the original and official itinerary that the structure was supposed to follow: “The Israeli Separation Barrier was supposed to materialize the border between Israel and the Palestinian territories within the West Bank. However, according to the 1949 border (*Green Line*), the current wall stands almost always in the Palestinian territory” (Lambert 2012, 70). As a result, there is a portion of space between the wall and the Green Line:

The land area in the West Bank located between the separation wall and the Green Line has been designated by the Israeli government as a 'seam zone' and declared a 'closed zone'. According to the Israeli military Declaration of Closing an Area No. S/20/03 made on 2 October 2003, 'no person will enter the seam area and no one will remain there'. This order, however, does not apply to Israelis or those who have the right to immigrate to Israel according to the country's Law of Return (Saddiki 2017, 14-15).

All of this implies that there has always been a hidden purpose behind the construction of the barrier which was “to include the largest possible amount of Jewish settlements on the Israeli side of the wall” (*ibid.*), include the largest amount of territory and expand the Israeli state.

The random way of designing the Separation Barrier as well as its diffused authorship (Weizman 2007, 163) has become the usual Israeli *modus operandi* regarding the developing

process of occupation: “The spatial organization of the Occupied Territories is a reflection not only of an ordered process of planning and implementation, but, and increasingly so, of 'structured chaos', in which the —often deliberate— selective absence of government intervention promotes an unregulated process of violent dispossession” (*ibid.*, 5). This strategy allows to keep on making decisions depending on the political situation of each specific moment. There is never a definitive decision, which makes it possible for the colonial machinery to be unpredictable. The concept of the diffused authorship applied to talk about the Separation Barrier means it is the result of the ideas and objectives of different actors whose decisions shape the itinerary of the structure. This makes it difficult to identify the people responsible of the development of the project since each section of the barrier could be the result of a convergence of interests and actors. For example, Eyal Weizman describes how the building of certain segments of the barrier could be the result of settlement lobby groups that force the barrier to be built around them, archaeological discoveries (the areas in which archaeological remains have been found are rapidly annexed) or environmental decisions (Israel sometimes annexes certain areas with the excuse of protecting the environment).

In addition to the chaotic way of building the barrier and its diffused authorship, it is necessary to talk about its infinite or permanent temporary nature, as Lambert and Weizman call it respectively, as well as the theoretically temporary nature of occupation. The Separation Barrier was initially supposed to be a temporary security structure. However, it has been erected for more than fifteen years now and certain sections of its itinerary are currently being built. For example, during 2015:

The Israeli authorities resumed construction of a section of the Barrier in the Cremisan valley extending from Beit Jala to the village of Walaja in the Bethlehem governorate. While this construction was approved by the Israeli Supreme Court, it contravenes the International Court of Justice’s Advisory Opinion of 2004. In total, 56km of the Barrier’s route are located within Bethlehem governorate. If completed as planned, 58 Palestinian farming families will be separated from approximately 3,000 dunams of land (OCHA 13, 2016).

This permanent temporary nature places the barrier in a temporal limbo and makes it difficult for Palestinians to claim for their borders.

Checkpoints

There are two main types of checkpoints: permanent and temporary (called *flying* by Israel). Permanent checkpoints are those on the line of the Separation Barrier designed to control Palestinians' access to the west part of the structure; temporary checkpoints are those inside the West Bank, mostly at the entrance of the Palestinian cities, that can appear or disappear surprisingly. Although the role of these checkpoints would seem to be to divide space and become an interface

between Palestine (conceived as the exterior) and Israel (conceived as the interior), the actual role of these structures, specially those placed in the West Bank, and therefore inside Palestine, is more “to biopolitically act on the Palestinian daily life by controlling the movement and therefore decreasing it to its minimum, than to really assume its role of interface between two milieus” (Lambert 2012, 75). Thus, the distinction between a hypothetical exterior and a hypothetical interior becomes not so clear, as some graffiti drawn on the wall surrounding the Qalandia checkpoint show: *one wall, two jails*.

The fact that the checkpoints are mechanisms for biopolitically controlling Palestinians' lives implies that “the checkpoints not only carve up space, but divide up time as well” (Weizman 2007, 148). Palestinians' lives have to adapt to the Israeli timetables (when checkpoints are open and closed) and to the temporality of interruption caused by the daily and sometimes unexpected presence of architectural obstacles. This explains why some Palestinians feel thankful when an improvement in a checkpoint is made, as some people told me when I was in Ramallah: “they are happy because they can cross the Qalandia checkpoint faster, but the border is still there”, a man living in Ramallah said. But, as Lefebvre argued:

So long as everyday life remains in thrall to abstract space, with its very concrete constraints; so long as the only improvements to occur are technical improvements of detail (for example, the frequency and speed of transportation, or relatively better amenities); so long, in short, as the only connection between work spaces, leisure spaces and living spaces is supplied by the agencies of political power and by their mechanisms of control –so long must the project of 'changing life' remain no more than a political rallying-cry to be taken up or abandoned according to the mood of the moment (Lefebvre 1991, 60).

The checkpoints, as architectural devices, work in combination with bureaucratic requirements that can be understood as soft (but not necessarily less obstructive) and invisible architectures that also condition movement: “Palestinians have to apply for more than a dozen different travel permits, each allowing different categories of persons to travel to different categories of space through different categories of checkpoints” (Weizman 2007, 146). However, according to the unofficial translation of the status of permits document made by the Legal Center for Freedom of Movement – Gisha (an Israeli non-for-profit organization founded in 2005) and updated as of June 5th, 2016, there were far more than just a dozen different types of permits: Actually, there were 48 types of authorizations for Palestinians living in the West Bank and 24 for Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip. This list includes permits for medical needs, accompanying a patient, visiting a patient, legal needs, academic needs, visiting the family, working or even praying at Temple Mount (among others). Previous to the access to a permit, Palestinians have to obtain a magnetic card that proves that they do not constitute any security threat. Palestinians can then apply for a permit in the Israeli District Coordination and Liaison (DCL) centers Located in Hebron, Bethlehem, Jericho, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Ephraim, Shechem and Jenin. This bureaucratic network of offices depends

on the Civil Administration of Judea and Samaria (West Bank). Finally, this organism depends on the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), a unit subordinate to the Israeli Ministry of Defense, that administrates the Palestinian territories under Israeli control (for example, Area C) and the Israeli settlements, and coordinates the relationship with the Palestinian Authority (PA) in these territories. There is also a number of Palestinian DCL offices, but they merely work as intermediaries between Palestinians and the Civil Administration, which has the last word and can approve or deny permits. Helga Tawil-Souri analyzes another bureaucratic mechanism, which is the ID card. This bureaucratic device “is the space in which Palestinians meet, confront, tolerate, and sometimes challenge the Israeli state. In fact, for Palestinians, ID cards are mundane 'things' that ultimately determine much of their political, economic, and social life, and not only at checkpoints” (Tawil-Souri 2011, 69). ID cards are made in different colors with the aim of distinguishing between different types of *beings* that live in Palestine/Israel. “The ID card regime, *especially* post-‘peace process,’ is a contact point through which Palestinians encounter the Israeli state, a mechanism through which Palestinian spatiality, territoriality, and corporeality are more penetrable, and penetrated, by the Israeli colonial regime” (Tawil-Souri 2011, 79). Despite the existence of this huge bureaucratic mechanism, the access to permits is mostly arbitrary and it contributes to the feeling of constant uncertainty, as Danny Filc has argued in the forward of the Joint report of Machsom Watch and Physicians for Human Rights-Israel entitled *The Bureaucracy of Occupation: the District Civil Liaison Offices* written by Hadas Ziv:

This arbitrariness, which brings to mind the world of Kafka, is not accidental. The obtuseness of the system constitutes a form of control no less effective than the restrictions on passage by themselves. When nothing is transparent, when it is never clear who will receive a permit and who will not, when one official says there is no restriction and a second official does not give the permit, control becomes absolute. If the restrictions were consistent, then people would be able to plan their steps. They would know what to expect. There would be a possibility –albeit the very smallest– of choice. When decisions are apparently random, control becomes absolute. No-one can be sure that he or she has not been –or will not be– ‘prohibited for reasons of security.’ The reasons are so numerous, and the use made of them changes so much, that uncertainty becomes the ultimate system of control within the framework of the certainty of the occupation. Those opposed to the occupation – demonstrators, journalists, certain sorts of workers, direct victims of army or settler violence – all these are potentially ‘prohibited for reasons of security.’ In this way the permit is not a means of making things easier for the residents, but a way of controlling them through the threat of not giving a permit.

Not only is the arbitrariness deliberate, the inefficiency of the system is built in too. It must be clear to anyone that there is no way that a system run by so few people can provide for the need for countless permits for so large a population. In the field of health, the situation is even more serious, since there is only one Health Coordinator for the West Bank and one for the Gaza Strip. More developed health systems than the Palestinian one are built on geographical centralisation of resources, so that access to health services requires freedom of movement. Such freedom of movement is even more necessary in the

Occupied Territories where the centres with advanced medical technology are few and treatments such as dialysis or radiotherapy necessitate travel from one district to another. The result is a high need for permits which a single coordinator is unable to supply. The system is built *a priori* so that it will be unable to deal with all the applications, without reference to their nature.

Thus, as a result, the permit system is a clever system of control which works at a number of levels: 1) It provides the illusion of the possibility of civil life or of distinguishing between “innocent people” and “terrorists”, and presents the occupation as weighing up humanitarian factors. 2) By its structure the permits system makes it clear that the lives of the Palestinians are completely under the control of the occupying forces. 3) The application for a travel permit necessitates a certain degree of acknowledgement of the system of occupation as a mechanism of approval. 4) The permit becomes a means of achieving collaboration with the system of occupation. 5) The arbitrariness of the term ‘prohibited for reasons of security’ leads the Palestinians living under the occupation and in desperate need of permits to endless self-restrictions lest they should do anything (but just what is unclear) which might turn them into someone ‘prohibited for reasons of security.’ Thus, under an appearance of humanity, the control over the lives and behaviour of the Palestinians in the occupied territories is ever tightened (Filc 2004, 5-6).

Settlements and outposts

The Israeli settlements and outposts constitute a longitudinal “obstacle in the local geography thus forcing Palestinian movement to be blocked or diverted” (Lambert 2012, 78-79). However, they also work as a vertical obstacle since they commonly “occupy the top of the hills in order to maintain a constant supervision of their surroundings, benefit[ing] from the best view on what they consider to be their land by right and constitute a very visible provocation to whoever sees them” (*ibid.*,79). Therefore, settlements and outposts are there to occupy the land but also to see and to be seen. They represent both an offensive and a defensive strategy. Palestinian villages remain in the valleys whereas Israeli settlements and outposts control them from the heights. Although it is not her main goal, Maryam S. Griffin provides a very illustrative and clear description of what settlements are and do in her article “Freedom Rides in Palestine: racial segregation and grassroots politics on the bus” (2015):

Israeli settlements in the West Bank are fenced-off suburban communities, almost exclusively located on hilltops, open only to Jewish residents and the military brigades sent to protect them. These colonies are spread out across the Palestinian territories and are considered illegal under international law. They are one of the most effective features of the Israeli occupation as they annex land through their own expansion and multiplication and also through the extra military presence and special, racially segregated roads they require to connect them to other settlements and to areas west of the Green Line. They also deepen the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in a different way: as they expand throughout Palestinian territory, they further fracture Palestinians into isolated enclaves. In fact, Israeli controlled ‘Area C’ on which the settlements are built constitutes the largest contiguous jurisdiction in the West Bank; far larger than any of the Palestinian Authority-controlled areas (Griffin 2015, 76).

Israeli settlements are sometimes not only considered illegal under international law, but also under Israeli national law. In 2014, for example, the Israeli High Court of Justice ruled the evacuation of the unauthorized, yet tolerated by the Israeli government, outpost of Amona recognizing that it had been built on private Palestinian land. The High Court established a period of two years for the settlers to leave Amona, what finally took place on February 2nd, 2017. This case also provides an example of another common strategy developed by Israel in order to expand its control over the territory of the West Bank, which consists of tolerating the existence of unauthorized, and therefore illegal, outposts and settlements with the aim of legalizing them retroactively. This is what happened on February 6th, 2017, when the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) passed the Regulation Bill.

Roads, tunnels and bridges

Roads in the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank can be banned for Palestinians, such as route 443, the history of which has been well documented by the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem. In 2002, route 443 was closed for Palestinian drivers and walkers because of security reasons and, despite the 2009 High Court decision ruling that the prohibition was unfair and that it must be lifted, there are still several restrictions that make it difficult for Palestinians to use the road. There is no official legislation that allows segregation on roads, except for route 443, but this does not impede Israeli authorities from actually developing a *de facto* system of segregated roads. As argued by B'Tselem:

As of 31 Jan. 2017, there were 59.22 kilometers of roads in the West Bank that Israel had classified for the sole, or practically sole, use of Israelis, first and foremost of settlers. Israel also prohibits Palestinians from even crossing some of these roads in a vehicle, thereby restricting their access to nearby roads that they are ostensibly not prohibited from using. In these cases, Palestinians travelers have to get out of the vehicle, cross the road on foot, and find an alternative mode of transportation on the other side. In addition, Palestinian motor traffic is prohibited on 6.72 kilometers of internal roads in downtown Hebron. Some sections are off-limits to Palestinian pedestrian traffic as well.

The forbidden-roads policy is not set out in military legislation or in any official document, except for the prohibition on travel on Route 443 that connects the Tel Aviv area with northern Jerusalem, which was prescribed in a military order five years after the prohibition was instituted and was partially lifted following a ruling by the High Court of Justice. Another road, which runs from the Beit 'Awwa junction to the Negohot settlement, was reopened following a High Court ruling given in October 2009. The IDF Spokesperson's Office informed B'Tselem that the prohibitions on Palestinian travel are based on 'verbal orders' given to soldiers. This mode of operation adds a dimension of uncertainty and makes it difficult to critique the policy and test its validity in court (B'Tselem 2017).

The network of Israeli-only roads allows the Israeli settlements of the West Bank to be connected together and it also allows Israelis to have access to Israel without having to drive

through the Palestinian villages or mixing with Palestinian drivers. This way, roads and settlements function as two organisms in symbiosis, “the latter served the former, the former overlooked and protected the latter” (Weizman 2007, 82). The Jewish National Fund (JNF) has also developed a series of roads that have specifically been built as security tools. They are called *security roads*:

Together with the ministries of Defense and Agriculture, the National Road Company and relevant regional councils, JNF builds security and agricultural roads. These vital roads ensure safe passage for IDF soldiers as they go about their daily task of protecting lives in communities throughout Israel. Since farmers, civilians and school children also use these roads as well they make a tremendous difference in the struggle to maintain a normal course of life.

JNF works on security projects throughout Israel in the Galilee, the center and along the confrontation line, the Jordan Valley and the western Negev. Work includes earthworks, drainage, foundations, paving and landscaping.

In the western Negev, in the region bordering on the Gaza Strip, as in other areas that are within missile and artillery range, our security roads are a vital component in day-to-day life. Military patrols regularly use the roads to keep the local communities safe, farmers could not tend their crops without them (particularly in times of war) and children would not reach school safely. Thanks to JNF’s road building activity the difficult situation residents of the western Negev now find themselves in, can be ameliorated (JNF 2017).

One of these *security roads* is the Perimeter Security Road around Moshav Neta-Mirsham finished at the beginning of 2015. The KKL-JNF describes its function as follows:

The security road will provide rapid access to and from the community and serve to guard its residents from terrorist infiltration. The project included earthworks, preparing the road base, and laying asphalt. KKL-JNF has been a major player in responding to the needs of the nation throughout Israel's checkered and dramatic history.

The Neta Mirsham Perimeter Security Road project addresses the need of a community that is comprised of former residents of Gush Katif, who were evacuated from the Gaza Strip in 2005 and are now rebuilding their lives anew.

In addition to providing residents with a safe route in and out of the community, the road will allow patrols to guard the community from the invasion of terrorists.

Moshav Neta-Mirsham was established in 2012, and has some 330 residents, most of whom were residents of Tel Ktifa and Kfar Darom in Gush Katif, before they were evacuated during the Gaza withdrawal in 2005 (KKL-JNF 2015).

But, this segregation network of roads does not only spread over the horizontal plane. Eyal Weizman stresses the importance of looking at the Israeli occupation not only as something that happens horizontally, but also as something that takes place vertically. In order to achieve the goal of colonizing the vertical plane, Israel has developed a system of Israeli-only tunnels and bridges that run beneath and over Palestinian territories, such as the Tunnel Road, which takes the shape of a bridge over the Palestinian cultivated valleys (Area B), and becomes a tunnel that runs under

Palestinian village of Beit Jalla (Area A) causing a vertical separation of space (Weizman 2007, 181-182).

As a consequence of the existence of segregated roads, there is also a system of segregated public transport. This becomes specially noticeable in buses. Since there are certain bus services that connect Israeli-only settlements, where Palestinians are not allowed to go without a work permit, segregation is therefore performed in buses themselves. Furthermore, in 2013, “the Israeli government announced the opening of a new Palestinian-only bus line to run from the West Bank into Israel, across the Green Line that divides them, in order to transport Palestinians with Israeli work permits”(Griffin 2015, 81). Two of the most popular reasons argued with the aim of justifying the existence of these Palestinian-only buses was the attempt to make Palestinians' trips more comfortable and the objective to reinforce security. Finally, segregation is even performed in the Israeli documents concerning driving safety policies, such as the Executive Summary of the National Road Safety Plan for 2020 entitled “Towards Safer Roads” by the Israel National Road Safety Authority, from the point of view of which the *typical* way of driving of Israeli Arabs constitute a specific threat for safety on roads. The document elaborated by the aforementioned Israeli institution talks about driving risks related to different sectors of the population and divides these sectors by age, except for the Arab sector. There is a special section dedicated to this sector at the end of the document in order to highlight the driving risks that appear as intrinsic to Arabs:

4. The Arab Sector

According to the classification of the Central Bureau of Statistics, Israeli Arabs account for 20% of Israel's population and are divided into Muslims (including Bedouins and Circassians), Christians and Druze.

The percentage of Israeli Arabs among all traffic fatalities stands at 37% – a disproportionately high rate compared to their representation in the general population, that continues to trend upwards.

Unlike other at-risk sectors of the population, in dealing with the problem of the Arab sector's vulnerability to traffic accidents and how to overcome it, it is necessary to apply a multi-systemic and multi-disciplinary approach that takes into account the fact that this population comprises an ethnic minority, with all the special aspects and implications that this involves.

Steps must be taken to improve the road safety climate in Arab towns, through a comprehensive safety program that will address such issues as upgrading infrastructure, increasing road safety awareness, inculcating safety norms and strengthening enforcement.

The program should be based, among other things, on safety performance indices adapted to the needs of the Arab sector. This activity in the Arab sector will require massive budgeting and careful crafting of a work plan (Israel National Road Safety Authority 2017).

Areas of control

After the Oslo Accords the West Bank was divided into three areas of control:

- Area A, under Palestinian civil and security control. It includes 18% of the land and is mainly constituted of Palestinian urban areas.
- Area B, under Palestinian civil control and Palestinian-Israeli security control. It includes 22% of the land and is mainly constituted of Palestinian rural areas.
- Area C, under full Israeli security control. It includes 60% of the West Bank. The Israeli control over Area C implies providing (or not) construction permits for houses or any kind of infrastructure. That is the reason why Palestinians have to face continuous building restriction in Area C:

The planning system applied in Area C favours Israeli settlement interests over the needs of the protected population and makes it almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain building permits: between 2010 and 2014, Palestinians submitted 2,020 applications for building permits in Area C, of which 33 were approved. A similarly restrictive planning regime in East Jerusalem has resulted in only 13 per cent of the municipal area zoned for Palestinian construction, most of which is already built up (OCHA 6, 2016).

The result of this situation is that many Palestinians build their houses in Area C without any kind of permit, which most of the times implies their homes will be sooner or later demolished. This organization of the landscape also benefits the development of Israeli settlements in Area C.

➔ STRATEGIES

Architecture is a malleable discipline that can be used not only for building structures but also to develop a series of strategies that, in this case, accompany the process of Israeli occupation with the aim of justifying it. Here I provide a description of four of these strategies based on the research made by Eyal Weizman:

Naturalization of colonization

This strategy consists of developing a building style for Israeli new projects that resembles the already existing style of the architecture of certain cities, specially Jerusalem. This implies a meticulous study of materials and shapes so that the new houses become integrated into the landscape. “The problem of planners and architects was not only how to build fast on this 'politically strategic' ground, but how to naturalize the new construction projects, make them appear as organic parts of the Israeli capital and the holy city” (Weizman 2007, 26). The objective in developing this strategy is to “sustain national narratives of belonging” (*ibid.*).

Archaeologization of colonization

This second strategy implies a conscious choice made by the Israeli authorities of what archaeological remains deserve to be unearthed for the sake of the Israeli national discourse. “Israeli biblical archaeologists were interested in the deeper levels of the Bronze and Iron Ages, which generally cover a period of time mentioned in the Bible” (*ibid.*, 40). This implies, Israeli archaeologists were not interested in any other past of what they call their land: “The upper layers of the Muslim and Ottoman periods were marginalized in digs and museums, often dismissed as representations of a stagnant period, discarded as 'too new', or dimply left alone to rot and crumble” (*ibid.*).

However, archaeological discoveries are not only meant to support a certain *History of Israel*, but also to physically support the present of the national project. “In some cases, the upper storeys of new homes would become literal extensions of their archaeological footprints, while other buildings would be built using older stones for the lower floors and newer stones at higher levels: others still *ibid.*, 42). Archaeological remains and archaeological aesthetics are sometimes used as part of the structure of contemporary buildings with the aim of anointing them with the sacred aura of a biblical past.

Becoming public to become forbidden

Some spaces of the West Bank are suddenly announced to be public, which implies it is not permitted to build there. This is a strategy aiming to reduce the amount of land available for Palestinian houses.

Preservation for the sake of colonization

The fourth strategy consists of not only constricting expansion of Palestinians horizontally but also constricting it vertically. The way of doing it is by claiming for the preservation of the “traditional rural character of Palestinian villages” (Weizman 2007, 50). The result of these preservation policies developed by Israel is the prohibition of tall Palestinian buildings in certain areas.

➔ PROCESSES

Choreographication of movement

Forty days after assuming ministerial office, Sharon announced the first proposal in a series of plans for the creation of Jewish settlements throughout the West Bank. The plan was prepared in collaboration with the architect Avraham Wachman, a professor at the Technion Institute of Technology in Haifa. Wachman was by then already world renowned for his role in the development of the Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation, designed in 1958 to enable choreographers to 'write' a dance down on paper like composers write notes. An so, Sharon's plan for the colonization of the depth of the West Bank emerged out of the meeting of the architect of dance notation with the architect of manoeuvre-warfare (Weizman 2007, 80).

The organization of space following occupation and colonization purposes causes a colonial choreographication of movement. These choreographies differ depending on who you are. As an Israeli citizen, your choreography would be based on continuity and contiguity. The architectural machinery for the colonizer is one that allows movement and connection. But, as a Palestinian, your coreography would be one based on disruption. The architectural machinery for the colonized makes movement difficult or even prohibits it. These two main choreographic patterns also differ in the type of temporalities they produce. The choreographication of movements is not only caused by the existence of a certain architecture of space, but also by the existence of several administrative restrictions to movement (bureaucracy) as well as to the existence of a series of units such as the police or the army that actually perform choreographed strategies for colonization and also make *the others* (Palestinians) perform the choreographies of the colonized.

The scholar André Lepecki, who mainly reflects on the field of performance studies, dance and theater, in his article “Choreopolice and choreopolitics: or, the task of the dancer” (2013) addresses this issue through the concepts of choreopolice and choreopolitics. The author argues that the choreopolice (the police's movement patterns and planned strategies aimed to produce normative ways of being in the space) is characterized by the absence of politics since the police's, or the army's, performances are based on orders and obligations and there can be no politics in such an act of communication because there is no freedom. Orders are to be obeyed, not to be talked, negotiated or discussed. That is why it is necessary for Lepecki to practice (to always keep on practicing) the art of the choreopolitics (a way of movement that does address the *political thing*), that is to say, to practice a planned, yet freely and communally agreed, kinetic strategy the purpose of which is avoiding conformity and confronting the process of choreopolicing. Lepecki, then, looks at the way bodies can develop masterful skills, strategies and choreographies of movement that allow them to endure and go in depth into the practice of politics.

However, choreopolicing strategies are also embodied by architecture: the way how a space is

designed and produced, the way how it is performed implies a series of possible movements and trajectories. Some of these choreopolice patterns of movements can crystallize and become habitus. Bourdieu in *Pascalian Meditations* (1997) describes how social reality is socially produced by its own development. The habitus is the consequence of living in the world. The way of being is both the cause and the consequence of that world. There is an embodiment of the structures of the world –something that comes from the process of getting used to the world, of living in the world– that one inhabits, and that structures –that can be choreographical– conditions the way how a body produces the world back. That means that a subject is not totally responsible of what s/he does. Yet, s/he is not totally irresponsible either. The relationship that links the body to the landscape is played in this precarious equilibrium where the body is forced to follow choreopolice patterns –that sometimes become a habitus–, but that body can also react to the choreopolice patterns and perform something else: choreopolitics.

The study of some of these examples of choreopolitics (choreographies that imply a non-normative/colonial use of bodies in space), indeed, is the main purpose of this PhD Thesis, in which several artists are going to be discussed in order to analyze the way they face the choreopolicing of space and the architecture of colonization in different contexts by re-appropriating border structures.

Segregation

The existence of certain devices such as the Separation Barrier, the Israeli-only roads, Israeli-only settlements or checkpoints to control Palestinians' access to space causes a reality of segregation that several authors, activists and politicians have compared to the former apartheid regime of South Africa.

Dispossession of land and forced displacement

The slow, but efficient, development of the occupation and colonization of the West Bank has caused the forced displacement of Palestinian families due to many of the reasons that have already been described: the physical presence of colonial architectural structures (such as settlements or the Separation Barrier), the demolition of Palestinian houses (a process that will be below described), the preservation of certain areas because of their military, environmental or archaeological value, etc. The land once inhabited by these families is taken by Israel which produces a situation of dispossession of land and also, a situation of dispossession of landscape, which is a necessary element to develop one's identity and feeling of belonging to space, as Shelley Egoz explains in his article “Landscape and identity: beyond a geography of one place” (2013). Memory, is also

inscribed in space, as Rober Moor argues when talking about *paths* in his book *On trails. An exploration* (2017).

Demolitions

“The systematic and organized destruction of Palestinian homes constitutes probably the most violent mean of architectural oppression that the State of Israel uses against the Palestinian people” (Lambert 2012, 90). There are two main types of demolitions that the State of Israel performs: demolitions because of a lack of permit and punitive demolitions.

The houses demolished because of a lack of permit are the result of the constrictive building and planning policies for Palestinians in Area C (under Israeli Civil Administration) and East Jerusalem. As the 2009 OCHA's Special Focus report on “Restricting Space: The Planning Regime Applied by Israel in Area C of the West Bank” shows:

Palestinian construction is effectively prohibited in some 70 percent of Area C, while in the remaining 30 percent, a range of restrictions virtually eliminate the possibility of obtaining a building permit. In practice, the Israeli authorities generally allow Palestinian construction only within the boundaries of an Israeli-approved plan and these cover less than one percent of Area C, much of which is already built-up. As a result, Palestinians are left with no choice but to build “illegally” and risk demolition of their structures and displacement (OCHA 2009, 1).

Some of the administrative strategies developed by Israel in order not to allow Palestinians from building include claiming certain areas to be state land, military zones, natural reserves, etc.

After the Interim Agreement (1995), an administrative transfer of responsibilities in Area C was supposed to be done from the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) to the Palestinian Authority. However, only a few of these responsibilities were effectively transferred such as those concerning health and education. This created a paradoxical situation in which “the difficulties in obtaining building permits from the ICA for the construction or expansion of schools and clinics significantly impede the fulfillment of this responsibility” (OCHA 2009, 3). But, Palestinians living in Area C do not only face a lack of access to the building permits but a lack of access to participation in space planning projects as well. This implies Palestinians cannot take part in the designing process of their own land and have to resign themselves to looking how others mold their landscape.

These restrictive construction policies applied in Area C do also affect those Palestinians living beyond its limits since many communities depend on the land artificially divided in the different areas of control :

Israel’s continued control over Area C affects not only Area C communities, but also the many thousands of residents of Areas A and B who own land in Area C. In addition, because it is the only contiguous territory in the West Bank, Area C is of vital importance to the entire population, containing valuable

grazing and agricultural land, water resources, and holding the land reserves necessary for the expansion of Palestinian population centers in Areas A and B and the development of national infrastructure (OCHA 2009, 3).

Punitive demolitions are those that take place against the architectural properties of the Palestinians that are classified as criminals and terrorists. These demolitions become collective punishments since the houses demolished are habitually the residence of other members of the prosecuted attackers' families as well.

The Israeli authorities resumed this practice in mid-2014, after an almost complete halt for the previous nine years, and expanded its application since October 2015, citing the need to deter potential Palestinian attackers. During 2015, the Israeli authorities demolished or sealed on punitive grounds 25 residential structures, displacing 157 Palestinians, including 74 children. This practice targets the family homes of suspected perpetrators of attacks against Israelis (including those killed during the attacks), and therefore constitute collective punishment; in several cases, apartments adjacent to those targeted have also been destroyed or severely damaged and their residents displaced (OCHA 9, 2016).

The number of demolitions performed by Israel is increasing as the 2016 OCHA report shows: “The number of Palestinian structures demolished, or dismantled and confiscated by the Israeli authorities across the West Bank sharply increased in the first four months of 2016, surpassing the figures for all of 2015 (598 vs. 548)” (OCHA 7, 2016). Sometimes, these demolitions are also accompanied of collective administrative punishments. This is what happened to the Al-Qunbar family: It was decided to revoke the residency status of several members of this family living in East Jerusalem after Fadi Al-Qunbar's truck attack against Israeli soldiers on January 8th, 2017. The house of the family was also demolished as part of the collective punishment.

Greenwashing and environmental racism/apartheid/colonialism

The greenwashing is a process that consists of dressing Israeli colonial policies regarding space up in eco-discourses. It implies destroying the Palestinian landscape with the excuse of preserving and taking care of the environment. Greenwashing techniques mainly consist of:

- **Afforestation of certain areas to bury the remains of Palestinian villages:** This is what happened to the village of Luby, for example, as the documentary *The Village under the Forest* (2013) by Mark J. Kaplan shows. The area where the remains of this village are placed became the chosen milieu for the planted South Africa Forest. As Sara Kershner, Mich Levy and Jesse Benjamin state in the introduction of the book *JNF Colonizing Palestine since 1901* (2011), “these forestation projects serve two purposes: to hide the ethnic cleansing of those Palestinians whose home it was, and to prevent Palestinians from returning to their homes” (Levy and Benjamin 2011, 7). The tree becomes a weapon.

- **Preservation of certain areas** in order not to allow Palestinians to build up their houses, farms or any other infrastructure. This strategy is based on the argument that Arabs do not look after nature. As an example, here is one of the quotes taken from the Israeli “National Outline Plan for Forests and Afforestation. NOP 22. Policy Document” (2011) by Moti Kaplan: “During the Arab conquest, there was no protection of land that had no owners, including forests” (Kaplan 2011, 23). The text explains how the Arab and Ottoman periods were characterized by the destruction of forests until the first legislation on forests was developed during the British Mandate (Forestry Ordinance of the British Mandate of 1926), on which the current Israeli legislation is based. This argument consists of merely denigrating the way of doing of the peoples that ruled and run the territory before the British Mandate (Arabs and Ottomans) and highlighting the ecological and recreational benefits of later British and Israeli legislation without any further analysis on the differences between these two models (previous and following the British Mandate) and without any comment on the pernicious eco-social consequences that the environmental practices of Israel in Palestine caused (land dispossession, forced displacement, change of the original natural landscape...). This also implies a colonial point of view regarding what ecology and environmentalism is. As Eurig Scandrett, in an “Open Letter to the Environmental Movement” (2011), explains –when talking about the Jewish National Fund–: arguing that Palestinians do not take care of the environment implies “a Jewish conception of environment –which is European, afforested, recreational, and universalized– ”(Scandrett 2011, 17). Thus, “the JNF excludes the Arab environment, denying its validity or dignity. The destruction of Arabic architecture, agriculture, landscape and its forcible replacement with ‘Jewish’ environments is intrinsic to a Zionist supremacist form of environmental injustice” (*ibid.*).
- **The modification of landscape** so that it does not represent the Palestinian identity anymore. The planted forests are mainly made of nonnative species of trees such as pines while olive trees are sometimes uprooted with the aim of creating a more European landscape.

The Jewish National Fund (JNF) has played a very important role in the development of this greenwashing process from the beginning and it has been intimately linked to the founding myths of the State of Israel exemplified by the expressions usually used to refer to Palestine such as *a land without people for a people without land* or the purpose of *making the desert bloom again*.

Created in 1901 to purchase land for a Jewish State in Palestine, the JNF is most commonly known for its century-old campaign to ‘plant a tree in Israel’ in order to ‘make the desert bloom.’ Contrary to the deception propagated by the JNF, Israel and Zionist mythology, the trees are not planted in a barren desert

empty of inhabitants that Jewish people have come to populate and make flourish. Lands were, and still are, obtained from their Palestinian inhabitants through exploitative land sales, forced removal or the State imposition of other apartheid policies.” (Kershner, Levy and Benjamin 2011, 4-5)

The JNF developed a pedagogical and propaganda strategy starting in 1904 based on the well-known blue boxes for fundraising. The money was used for tree planting in Palestine and because of this charitable image, “the JNF Blue Box became one of the most familiar symbols of Zionism and is taken to be the symbol of world Jewry's support for Israel ” (Kershner, Levy and Benjamin 2011, 5). This way, the colonial project gained supporters thanks to an eco-discourse and an environmental mask. The truth, however, is that “the JNF has managed to wield the tree itself as a weapon of destruction” (*ibid.*, 8), in the same way both the bulldozer and architecture itself have become weaponized (Lambert 2012 and 2016).

Urbicide and memoricide

Urbicide is a large process of destruction in which civil architecture becomes the main target. “One could define it as the act of destroying buildings and cities that do not constitute any military targets. Urbicide is rather an act that is supposed to affect the very life of the population in such a way that war cannot be ignored by anybody and must be experienced on a daily basis by a nation's civilians” (Lambert 2012, 23). This strategy implies that there is no specific space for the performance of conflict or war anymore in Palestine. The process of occupation is not a matter of negotiation but a question of spatial and architectural acts that has exceeded the terrain of politics. Urbicide as the material destruction of land and landscape is also a process of destruction of:

- **Heritage:** “One should not forget that buildings and cities are the most tangible element of a civilization since even the written heritage that composes a nation's archive requires an architectural container” (Lambert 2012, 24).
- **Identity:** The destruction of space implies a destruction of the subjective ties that connect the land to its population.
- **Memory:** Urbicides produce memoricides since the material traces of both the ancient and the recent past are eliminated, removed or buried.

“Urbicide has thus become a scientific, surgical, military operation in architecture that either simply murders a civilian population by the means of architecture, or practically and symbolically destroys the organizational and cultural aspects of the city in a biopolitical attack on a population” (*ibid.*, 25).

Gentrification

This is a urban process that consists of making certain changes in the urban structure of a neighborhood by improving the infrastructure available, for example, so that it attracts new social groups, habitually belonging to an upper social class. Most of the times, it implies that the original inhabitants of the neighborhood have to leave their homes because the environment becomes too elitist, access to goods and services become too expensive, house renting prices rise and they cannot afford living there anymore. The process of gentrification is usually related to a change of the urban dynamics caused because of capitalist objectives. In the past, the center of the cities became the home of the lower social classes and the upper ones moved to the periphery of urban areas where new buildings were being built. Nowadays, multiple companies are investing their money in redesigning the center of the cities and upper classes and tourists are becoming the new inhabitants. This process is taking place in multiple cities all over the world and is not exclusive of any context. However, it is common to apply the concept of gentrification to talk about what happened and is still happening to the Palestinian city of Jaffa specifically. The origins of the gentrification process in Jaffa (today called Yafo, a neighborhood of Tel Aviv) date back to the 1950's, when Jaffa was mostly destroyed and several Palestinian families were forced to move from their home after the 1948 Nakba. The city was then incorporated to Tel Aviv. Gentrification has been used as a strategy for the Israelization of Jaffa since only wealthy Israelis can afford the new houses and facilities that are being built as part of large urban projects such as the one called Andromeda Hill:

Opened in 2000, Andromeda Hill is a striking combination of old world beauty, architectural charm and modern day comfort.

The striking complex built atop an Old Jaffa buttress named for Greek mythology's Andromeda who wastied to a rock facing the Mediterranean Sea as a sacrifice to sea god Poseidon. The city's ancient port is believed to be the oldest in the world and in the 18th century, Napoleon of France ransacked Jaffa.

Today, Andromeda Hill is an intimate, "city within a city": Your stay puts you in an exclusive, friendly residential-type setting with circulated saltwater swimming pool maintainted at a comfortable 24 degrees,lounge deck, complimentary towel service, Fitness spa, a poolside caf[e], open promenade and lushgardens, sea views, en-suite kitchenettes, a conference room, parking and a 24-hour security.

Relax and enjoy our sweeping sea views from the comfort of your balcony or while lounging poolside, orexplore your surroundings. Old Jaffa is rife with historical and cultural gems including the world'soldest port city, theater venues, multi-cultural mosques, churches and synagogues, Mid-East, French cuisine and seafood restaurants, designer art and jewelry galleries and the bustling antique market (Andromeda Hill 2017).

It is noticeable that the discourse strategy is here developed for the sake of gentrification, touristification and occupation. There is a continuous reference to the traditions of ancient Jaffa and

the surrounding Middle Eastern and Mediterranean typical landscape that are described in a very orientalist and exotic way. At the same time, it is obvious that the project itself is placed outside all this environment. The Andromeda Hill project is a luxury island surrounded by a folkloric landscape. The above provided description is an example of how the Palestinian identity is addressed as an exotic product that is there to be bought and to be enjoyed, it is an example of “topography turned into scenography” (Weizman 2007, 135). Although Weizman wrote these words to talk about occupation in a more general way, they are also useful to understand how Jaffa is being customized and colonized by Israel through a process of gentrification.

Gentrification, as a urban process related to the neoliberal policies concerning urbanism is not only performed by Israelis and foreign entrepreneurs, but also by Palestinians in the Palestinian territories with the authorization of the Palestinian Authority. An example is the Rawabi project, the first planned city in Palestine, led by Bashar Masri. In the Rawabi web page, the project is described as follows:

The city of Rawabi was born of a strategic partnership forged between Massar International and the State of Qatar, led by Palestinian entrepreneur Bashar Masri. Built on a series of breathtaking hilltops north of Jerusalem and Ramallah, the city overlooks the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the landscape of Palestine to the north and east. As Palestine’s first master planned city, Rawabi is a modern, innovative approach to urban development, integrating best practices in planning, sustainability and resource conservation in all its aspects.

Initially, the city is building 5,000 housing units spread across 22 neighborhoods which will ultimately be home to more than 25,000 people. Subsequent construction phases will bring the city’s population to 40,000.

Rawabi’s unique architecture embraces elements of the Palestinian cultural heritage and blends them into sleek, modern design aesthetic. A bustling downtown core anchors the surrounding neighborhoods. The city center’s pedestrian promenade bursts with shopping and entertainment options; in the high-rise towers above, business incubators and the forward-positioned enterprises of a new knowledge economy will help fuel the economic life of the city.

Every facet of day-to-day living has been considered in the city’s overall design. Rawabi’s English Academy, the city’s first school, welcomed students in September 2016. The rapidly expanding urban infrastructure will soon include a hospital and health-care service facilities, fire, police and public safety services and houses of worship. Residents already enjoy the huge WaDina sports and recreation complex, featuring a 15,000 seat Roman-style open air theater.

For the hundreds of families already in residence, the dream of Rawabi has come true. But with just a fraction of its power and potential realized, we know the bold journey of this “shining city on a hill” is a story that has only just begun (Rawabi 2017).

The Rawabi project is described as the new paradigm for Palestinian urbanism, even though it has caused the displacement of many Palestinian rural families and despite its relation to the politics

of occupation developed by Israel, as Tina Grandinetti argues in her article for *The Funambulist* magazine entitled “Ramallah. The suburban homes of the new Palestinian middle class” (2015):

The initial plans for Rawabi were introduced at the first Palestinian Investment Conference, held in 2008 as part of the Palestinian Authority’s attempt to attract foreign direct investment. Though the conference was held by the private sector, it was part of a broader push toward neoliberalization undertaken by then-Prime Minister (and, importantly, former IMF economist) Salam Fayyad, and largely continued by his successors. The prime minister’s letter to participating investors read, “We are throwing a party, and the whole world is invited. This conference is a chance to show a different face of Palestine: A Palestine conducive to economic growth and international investment.”

Rawabi fit well with the Conference’s focus of creating public–private partnerships to facilitate market-based economic growth in Palestine; the PA contributes infrastructure to the project, which itself is financed by the Bayti Real Estate Investment Company, a Qatari company founded by Palestinian-American entrepreneur Bashar al-Masri. More importantly, Rawabi fit into the PA’s emerging neoliberal agenda. Fayyad’s administration established a development paradigm that seeks to build state institutions in the absence of a Palestinian state and to facilitate economic growth regardless of the occupation. Pursuing short-term economic benefits is intended to encourage Israel to engage more productively with the PA as a state body. Israel has encouraged this neoliberal transition since the Oslo Accords, recognizing that the concentration of governing power within a narrow elite pursuing short-term, profit-oriented objectives would ensure that a certain class of Palestinians would be politically and economically invested in occupation. This economic framework actively builds the occupation into Palestinian development, creating an economy whose very structure is built upon a foundation of continued occupation and settler colonialism.

Thus, Rawabi emerged as the embodiment of a neoliberal project to marry two powerful regimes of control; reinforcing the disciplinary power of the soldier with the persuasive power of the capitalist, in order to produce a new Palestinian subjectivity that is invested in the maintenance of the status quo, rather than resistance to it. Cities and urban spaces are symbolic of the needs, aspirations, and culture, of the people who live in them, as well as the social order that they are a part of. That Rawabi’s financing and architecture are shaped and molded in the image of the occupier –and funded in part by Israeli investors– begs the question of what implications it carries as a symbolic space (Grandinetti 2015, 15-16).

Therefore, despite its futuristic and optimistic image and the Rawabi’s attempt to avoid the phantom of Israeli occupation, the town is intimately linked to it and it is, from the point of view of Grandinetti and several civil organizations and collectives such as the BDS movement, reinforcing the process of normalization of occupation because:

- **Rawabi is not an autonomous city:** It still depends, for example, as any other Palestinian village in the West Bank, on the Israeli-Palestinian fight for the control of water that takes place in the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Water Committee, created in 1995. However, the Rawabi project is presented as a new city free of conflict or any other problem.
- **Some of the materials used for the construction of Rawabi come from Israeli suppliers,** like cement, the 85% of which comes from the Nesher Israel Cement Enterprises Ltd

according to several media. Bashar Masri does not deny his collaboration with Israeli suppliers but insists on the idea that Rawabi is not being built *thanks* to Israel but *despite* it, as he stated for *The Guardian* (May 24th, 2016).

Because of all of this, the project of Rawabi has become a paradoxical representation of the Palestinian middle class' expectations and desires and the reality of occupation. Some people in Ramallah indeed described Rawabi as a confusing project.

What happens in Rawabi is different from what happened in Jaffa, obviously. However one can still point to some similarities that allows me to link both contexts. The transformation of space both in Rawabi and in Jaffa is the result of the intersection between colonial and neoliberal policies. Thus, they both are examples of coloniality developing thanks to the tools provided by economy. The process of gentrification is here used as a tool not only for the pursuit of economic objectives, but also for the accomplishment of colonial goals. The border is built also by following a very specific type of what can be called *colonial economic engineering*.

➔ METAPHORS

Archipelago

Both Eyal Weizman and Léopold Lambert, and many other authors (such as Julien Boussac), have compared the graphic image of the West Bank map to an archipelago due to its existence as a group of multiple small islands surrounded by the sea of colonized space. There are also Israeli islands that become enclosed in a certain area because of the fragmentation of space. However, the status of the Israeli and the Palestinian islands is not the same.

The wall produces a fragmentation of space in which different islands (both Israeli and Palestinian) appear. The function of the respective barriers that enclose these islands must not be confused, however. The walls around 'Israeli islands' where Israeli law applies, are meant to protect the lives of settlers and exclude a threatening exterior. Gates within the fences open onto protected fast and wide traffic corridors, effectively integrating the settlers economically and politically with Israel. The fences, walls, ditches, dykes and all sorts of other territorial apparatuses and inventions placed around Palestinian territorial islands, on the other hand, are conceived to prohibit 'security threats' from leaking out (Weizman 2007, 178).

This fragmentation of space has political consequences since it becomes increasingly difficult for Palestinians to claim for their land and their state. What state if the whole territory is divided into small pieces? The *archipelagization* of space, then, is the shaping trend developed by the whole Israeli strategy of colonization. Thus, the metaphor of the archipelago does not only work as a descriptive category for analysis. It is also a political tool for becoming aware of what is going on in this occupation field (instead of battle field).

Meanders

Eyal Weizman compared the Separation Barrier to the meanders of a river (Weizman 2007, 26).

This comparison is interesting because of two main reasons:

- **The fluidity of the concept of *border*** when applied to talk about Palestine.

The frontiers of the Occupied Territories are not rigid and fixed at all; rather, they are elastic and in constant transformation. The linear border, a cartographic imaginary inherited from the military and political spatiality of the nation state has splintered into a multitude of temporary, transportable, deployable and removable border synonyms (Weizman 2007, 7).

The border between Palestine and Israel is the illusion of a border. The border is neither represented by a line nor by a wall anymore, but by all the elements that constitute the architecture of occupation. And this border is everywhere and nowhere at the same time because it *can* (dis)appear wherever. An example is what happened to the illegal outpost of Amona. It was dismantled on February 2nd, 2017 due to an Israel's High Court decision. However, the same day the Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced his objective of building a new settlement as soon as possible. It is also what happens with the temporary checkpoints. This situation characterized by the incessant feeling of being inhabiting and embodying the border makes the whole landscape become a borderland. The border is not a limit or boundary anymore but an area, a volume and an atmosphere. It is three-dimensional and potentially omnipresent.

- **The sinuous itinerary of the Separation Barrier** which makes it difficult to predict where the border is going to be.

2. WESTERN SAHARA

Western Sahara is a disputed territory the history of which has been well summarized by Bernabé López García and Miguel Hernando de Larramendi in their article “El Sáhara Occidental, obstáculo en la construcción magrebí” (2005) as follows:

La secuencia de hechos es bien conocida y sería más o menos la siguiente: El reparto del territorio entre Marruecos y Mauritania al que dio lugar los Acuerdos Tripartitos de Madrid de noviembre 1975; el éxodo de decenas de miles de saharauis hacia la región de Tinduf en Argelia; la guerra emprendida contra los dos Estados ocupantes por el Frente Polisario; la posterior retirada mauritana que dio lugar a la ocupación marroquí de Río de Oro; la construcción de un muro para aislar de las infiltraciones guerrilleras a gran parte del territorio controlado por el Ejército marroquí; la aceptación por el rey Hasan II en Nairobi en 1981 de la vía refrendaria como el camino para llegar a una solución definitiva; las resistencias de las

fuerzas políticas marroquíes que sólo admitieron la idea de un “referéndum confirmativo” de la marroquinidad del territorio; la reconciliación argelino-marroquí de 1988 que lleva al esbozo del primer plan de paz, que empieza a aplicarse en 1991 con un alto el fuego; el inicio del proceso de identificación de los votantes en el referéndum en 1994; las trabas que las partes -cada una en su estilo- opondrán al desarrollo del proceso; las negociaciones abiertas o secretas entre las partes que tendrán lugar en Marrakech, Ginebra, Tánger, Houston, Londres y Lisboa, ya bajo la mediación del estadounidense James Baker; la identificación de 135.667 saharauis hasta el 6 de julio de 1999, de los que fueron admitidos como censo provisional 84.251 electores; las reclamaciones marroquíes sobre los 60.000 no estimados por la Misión de Naciones Unidas para el Referéndum en el Sáhara Occidental (MINURSO); las tensiones surgidas en El Aaiún en septiembre de 1999 tras la entronización de Mohamed VI que motivaron el relevo de los responsables marroquíes del dossier sahariano, incluyendo la destitución posterior del todopoderoso ex ministro del Interior, Dris Basri; la esperanza de solución por medio de lo que se denominó la “tercera vía”, que se plasmó en una propuesta de James Baker en 2001 que incluía una amplia autonomía del territorio bajo soberanía marroquí, pero que no gustó al Frente Polisario ni a Argelia; el globo sonda lanzado en su visita al Instituto James Baker de Houston en noviembre de 2001 por el presidente Buteflika de una hipotética y nueva partición del territorio del Sáhara y, por último, una nueva propuesta de Baker en 2003 en el mismo sentido, pero que esta vez sí fue aceptada por el Frente Polisario pero asustó a Marruecos por la libertad que daba al movimiento independentista para defender sus tesis en el interior del territorio del Sáhara. Tras esta sucesión de hechos, una vez más, el impasse planea sobre este conflicto (López García and Hernando de Larramendi 2005).

To this brief historical summary, one would have to add the events that have been taking place since 2005. This period has been characterized by an economic strategy developed by Morocco. The attempt to develop the region of Western Sahara economically is but a strategy the aim of which is to improve the material conditions in the area so that political protests and vindications are silenced. Maybe, some of the most important events taking place during this period of time were the Gdeim Izik Sahrawi protest camp in 2010 and the February 20th Moroccan movement. These two moments that chronologically coincide with the beginning of the Arab Spring caused a political displacement leading to the announcement of some changes in Morocco. What is interesting for this PhD Thesis, though, is that this conflict has become the cause of the construction of another wall and, like the Separation Barrier in the West Bank, the frontier architectural structure that exists between the occupied area of Western Sahara (located east of the barrier) and the Free Zone, as the Polisario calls it (located west of the barrier), has also been given different names. *Berm* is the most common term used to refer to this structure because of its materials and shape: it is a series of around 2,700km long and 2-3m tall sand-made walls (also described as earthworks or fortifications) that separate both parts of Western Sahara. However, the barrier is more than just sand. Over the years, it has been reinforced with other materials, such as stones and barbed wire; other structures, such as fences, trenches and landmines; and other systems, such as radar devices. Karine Bennafla provides an accurate description of the structure in her article “Illusion cartographique au Nord,

barrière desable à l'Est : les frontières mouvantes du Sahara occidental" (2013):

Les remblais de sable du *berm*, situés en territoire sous contrôle marocain, sont aujourd'hui protégés par plusieurs dizaines de milliers de soldats marocains (leur nombre fluctue selon les sources). D'une longueur totale oscillant entre 2500 et 2700 kilomètres, les lignes dunaires sont flanquées de tranchées, de barbelés, de blindés, sans compter les millions de mines antipersonnelles larguées par l'aviation marocaine. Des points d'appui et d'observation, des forts et des bases souterraines dotés d'équipements électroniques pour détecter toute présence humaine s'égrenent à intervalles réguliers le long du *berm*. Sur le territoire contrôlé par le Polisario, les accords de cessez-le-feu ont défini à partir de la ligne de front une zone tampon profonde de cinq kilomètres (où toute présence est interdite), prolongée vers l'Est par une zone réglementée de 25 kilomètres. Quelques 230 Casques Bleus surveillent depuis 20 ans la zone de séparation depuis des bases éparpillées de part et d'autre de la barrière de sable (Bennafla 2013).

The web-page of the campaign Together to Remove the Wall includes a description and a picture of the wall made by Francesc Verdugo Ibarz that also stresses its complex structure:

The wall is a series of sand and stone walls of two to three meters high; it extends along topographic high points (such as peaks and mountains) throughout the Sahrawi Territory. It is protected by bunkers, ditches, trenches, barbed wire, mines and electronic detection systems and defended by more than 160,000 Moroccan soldiers. Over every 5 kilometres of the wall, there is a military base of about 100 Moroccan soldiers. About four kilometres behind each major observation post, there is a mobile rapid intervention force (with armoured vehicles, tanks, etc.) A series of overlapping fixed and mobile radars, with a range of 60 to 80 km, are placed along the wall. According to some sources, Morocco spends \$ 2 million daily to maintain the wall (Remove the Wall 2017).

The complexity of the frontier structure, in addition to the uncertainty regarding some sections of the barrier, therefore, makes it impossible to keep on naming it just a *berm*. A berm, as the online English Cambridge dictionary shows is only "a flat or raised strip of land, often created in order to separate or protect an area " (accessed February 28th, 2017). The frontier structure in Western Sahara clearly exceeds this definition. The question then is: why has this term been chosen in order to identify this structure? My theory here is that *berm* is a term that is not intimately related to violence and the militarization of borders in the social collective imaginary, so it is used with the aim of ideologically and symbolically reducing the intrinsic violence of the structure. Also, *berm* sounds like a very specific and aseptic term, which produces the illusion that it has been decided to use it based on a scientific and objective reason. This illusion is also based on the fact that not too many people actually know the meaning of the word as a quick survey that I conducted (February 23rd, 2017) proves. For this survey, forty five people were asked to define the term *berm*. I conducted the survey in Spanish, since the same word is used to name the structure in different UN official documents (*berma*). Forty three people said they did not know the meaning of the word. The three people that defined the term were:

- An engineer, that related the term to the construction of roads and highways.

- A translator coming from Spain who had been living in Chile for some time and was used to certain words that are more common in Chile than in Spain. She also related the term to the structure used in roads to separate lanes.
- A Scotch sculptor living in Edinburgh that had been working in the field of landscape art and that accurately defined the word as follows (after having translated it into English): “a constructed landscape feature, a long, low earth mound, creating a gentle barrier (e.g. can be used round a children's area, to keep them inside the space...)”.

The different definitions provided by the three people that knew the meaning of *berm* show they do not relate it to a military landscape and therefore, they do not look at it as a violent structure. The strategy in consciously using this term to name the structure and avoiding others is, then, likely related to political reasons. As already said, official institutions, such as the UN, use the word *berm* to write their reports and official documents on the situation in Western Sahara and almost completely avoid other different words to talk about the frontier structure (barrier, wall, structure...). In this PhD Thesis, the *berm* of Western Sahara is, most of the times, not called berm, but Separation Barrier (the same term used to talk about the wall in the West Bank) since it is a structure that divides a given territory into two parts and stop locals from moving freely. Another reason not to use the word *berm*, is that, despite it could be seen as a more accurate term, it actually hide the violent dimension of the physical structure. In the following table, the number of times that each term (*berm*, *wall* or *barrier*) is used to describe the Separation Barrier of Western Sahara in the UN Security Council “Reports of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara” from 2012 to 2016 is shown⁵. The table includes the number of times these terms are used in three versions of the reports (in English, Spanish and French).

TERM YEAR	BERM/BERMA/-	WALL/MURO/MUR	BARRIER/BARRERA/BARRIÈRE
2012	30/31/0	3/3/33 ⁶	1/1/0
2013	27/27/0	2/2/27	0/0/0
2014	20/20/0	0/0/20	0/0/0
2015	28/28/0	0/0/28	0/0/0
2016	34/33/0	0/0/32	0/0/0

In the Arabic version of the “Reports of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara”, the expression used to refer to the Moroccan Separation Barrier is الجدار الرملي

⁵ These reports are originally written in English and they are afterwards officially translated into other languages.

⁶ In French they use the term *mur de sable* (sand wall) to talk about the berm and they used the term *mur* to talk about the architectural structure in a more general way. This is why in the first column of the table the equivalent of *berm* in French is not provided.

(wall of sand). Again, the term used in Arabic is related to a descriptive and aseptic strategy of conceptualization. If we look at the way this architectural structure is named in Arabic in other more informal contexts such as web-pages, blogs, or newspapers we find:

- الجدار الأمني (security wall)
- الجدار المغربي (Moroccan wall)
- الجدار الأمني العازل (security separation wall)
- الجدار الدفاعي (defensive wall)

These names do refer in a more clear way to the ideological positions from which one speaks when describing or talking about the architectural structure. Calling it *Moroccan* implies that one clearly identifies the agent that produced the wall. Calling it *defensive* clearly identifies the function of the structure (although the adjective *defensive* is not only a linguistic tool for describing, but also a linguistic tool strategically used in order to justify the necessity of the wall)⁷.

All these names given to the Moroccan Separation Barrier (including the names used in this PhD Thesis) imply a strategy that is both political and ontological since they place the speaker in a specific position regarding the political actors and also in a specific position regarding the *being* (a position from which one tries to know what the wall *is*).

The Separation Barrier in Western Sahara started being built in 1980-1981 by Morocco with the aim of protecting the Moroccan territory from Sahrawi attacks. Thus, the structure was planned as a defensive device. It took six years to build the series of walls (six) that constitute the whole project. However, as Bennafla explains, the objective in building this Separation Barrier was not only defensive, but also economic and military. Building these walls allowed Morocco to take control of the main Sahrawi sources and towns and also to change the rules of the conflict: the walls made it possible for Morocco to consolidate its position in the field and repel the Polisario attacks:

C'est entre 1981 et 1987 que l'Etat marocain entreprend, avec l'aide de techniciens français, la fortification militaire de lignes de dunes dans une perspective défensive. La fin des années 1970 est alors marquée par des combats violents entre les Forces armées marocaines (FAR) et le Front Polisario, qui agit dès 1976 depuis des bases arrière algérienne et mauritanienne. La prise pour cible du territoire marocain (hors de la zone controversée) et l'occupation ponctuelle de Tan Tan par les indépendantistes (opération 'Houari Boumédiène') sont vécues côté marocain comme un affront et renforcent l'idée d'un nécessaire mur de sécurisation pour protéger les centres névralgiques du Sahara, à savoir les villes, les oasis, les mines de phosphate de Bou Craa et les sources de la Saguia al Hamra (MohsenFinan, 2004). Entreprise à la faveur d'un renversement du rapport de forces sur le terrain par les FAR, la fortification de dunes s'étale sur plusieurs années avec l'aménagement de lignes successives, dont la première ceint le triangle Bou Craa-

⁷ This happens in many other contexts. See, for example, the reasons argued to justify the construction of the wall between Kenya and Somalia. The official version is that the wall allows Kenya to defend its people from terrorism (specifically from the attacks of Al-Shabaab).

Smara-Boujdour.

Cette 'barriérisation' du flanc oriental et méridional du 'Sahara utile' n'est pas uniquement une mesure préventive destinée à juguler les incursions du Polisario. L'entreprise répond aussi à une finalité militarostratégique: transformer les modalités de la guerre. Statiques et cantonnées sur une position défensive, les FAR subissaient les actions de guérilla du Polisario, dont les troupes bien armées (par l'Algérie, la Libye et la Corée du Nord) étaient capables d'une grande mobilité. Avec les murs de sable, l'affrontement armé devint guerre de position et la supériorité tactique du Polisario, fondée sur une connaissance du terrain, fut réduite à néant. La guérilla s'épuisa contre les fortifications (Bennafla 2013).

The defensive role of the Separation Barrier argued by the Moroccan authorities, however, has become obsolete after the ceasefire of 1991. Then, what is the objective in perpetuating the Separation Barrier today? Bennafla explains the main goal in doing it is to maintain the *status quo* so that the annexation of the occupied territories of Western Sahara consolidates:

Si la fonction attendue de sécurisation du *berm* est devenue obsolète avec le cessez le feu, l'impossible organisation du référendum et l'échec répété des négociations maintiennent la tension et confèrent à la fortification une autre fonction, celle de pérenniser le statut quo et d'entériner l'annexion marocaine des deux tiers du territoire du Sahara occidental (Bennafla 2013).

Saddiki also argues that after the ceasefire, the Separation Barrier has performed different objectives and functions: "Although the Western Sahara Wall was initially built for defensive reasons, since the beginning of the 1990s, its status has undergone an important change with the creation of the MINURSO. Military agreements signed by the two sides of the conflict have defined the status of the Berm and surrounding areas" (Saddiki 2017, 107). Now, the *berm* works as the "Landmark of the Ceasefire Monitoring Agreement" (*ibid.*, 109) and also as a tool for immigration and terrorism management.

When talking about the physical construction of borders, such as the one now addressed, it is necessary to talk about the construction of national identities, such as the Moroccan and the Sahrawi, as well. Bennafla reflects on the building process of the Sahrawi identity and the process of conceptualizing the belonging ties that attach the Sahrawi people to an artificial bordered and therefore limited territory called Western Sahara. She explains that this process is due to the current necessity of defining a national territory (not only a national identity) to claim for self-determination. The concept of the Nation-State remains the normative framework in which self-determination has to be performed, or, in words of Bennafla, "dans le droit international, il n'y a pas d'Etat sans le tandem territoire et frontière" (2013). Said Saddiki also reflects on the processes linked to the production of national identity and self-determination discourses by focusing on the concept of *sovereignty*:

The Advisory Opinion rendered on 6 October 1975 by the International Court of Justice remains one of the key international legal bases to which Morocco refers in its policy towards the Western Sahara. This Advisory Opinion acknowledged that there were legal ties of allegiance between the Western Sahara

territory and the Kingdom of Morocco at the time of colonization by Spain. The attachment of the population to the central power (Sultans, Princes, Kalifas) during Islamic history was based especially on religious and temporal ties of the allegiance (*beyâa*), which was considered as a contract between the population and the governor. It is noteworthy that the notion of sovereignty that had been practiced in the Arab and Muslim World differed from 'Westphalian sovereignty' that emerged in Europe following the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648. Even if the system of Westphalian sovereignty –based on territoriality– has dominated international relations from that time forward, it could not be applied retrospectively to earlier nations that had known a specific government and administration adapted to their cultural, political and social environment (Saddiki 2017, 98).

Saddiki approach to the question –as well as other authors'– highlights that the problem is that we look at the Sahrawi-Moroccan conflict from western traditions, concepts, practices and colonial heritage: “the *uti possidetis* principle is a legal principle that provides that successor states accept international boundaries set by predecessor regimes” (Saddiki 2017, 104). It implies that the territorial configuration of the map after the colonial rule has been produced by taking into account only the colonial territorial structure. In this case, it implies forgetting many of the historical ties that connect the different regional actors.

It is not the objective of this PhD Thesis to debate whether the Sahrawi borders claimed by the Polisario or those internationally recognized are artificial or not. Of course, the colonial period did have a huge influence on the designing of borders and the following liberation period during which most countries achieved their independence reinforcing the idea of the State (with capitals) as the container of an homogeneous nation (a people with a common past, culture, language...). The fact is that the historical development of the region led us here: there is a conflict in Western Sahara and there is a people claiming for a referendum in order to reach their independence and, instead of providing a political opportunity for negotiation, the Moroccan physical barrier works as a device that reinforces the other side of the coin: the Moroccan national identity. This barrier can be seen both as a military device that highlights the Moroccan desire of imposing unilateral borders and managing space with the aim of annexing it and make it become a part of the Nation or as a defensive tool that, in fact, caused that Morocco renounced its *right* to a large amount of land (the Sahrawi Free Zone or Liberated Territories). The final objective is to achieve the “cohérence territoriale” (territorial coherence) through the Ministère de l'Urbanisme et de l'Aménagement du Territoire. In this way towards territorial coherence there are three main solutions: the independence of Western Sahara, the maintenance of the status quo order, or the autonomy of Western Sahara inside Morocco (Saddiki 2017). In any case, “it is worth mentioning that the sand wall does not constitute an international border” (Saddiki 2012, 206).

As already been said, the Separation Barrier includes different devices, materials and mechanisms and there is also a series of processes that are related to this architectures. This multiplicity of tools and processes is here below analyzed:

➔ DEVICES

Obstacles

As described by Gaici Nah Bachir in his book *El muro marroquí en el Sáhara Occidental. Historia, estructura y efectos* (2017), the Moroccan Separation Barrier includes both non-explosive obstacles (barbed wire, sections of the wall made of stone, antitank trenches) and explosive ones (antitank mines and antipersonnel mines). The UNMAS (United Nations Mine Action Service) has reported that both sides of the Separation Barrier “remain contaminated with landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW)” (UNMAS 2017). These dangerous mobile devices that can be displaced due to the different meteorological phenomena make the border expand horizontally and randomly, which means that the border is potentially everywhere:

Contamination from landmines and ERW remains widespread in the Territory of Western Sahara. There is very limited information available regarding the location of hazardous areas, especially west of the berm. In 2008, a dangerous area survey was completed in five locations to the east of the berm. According to the results of the survey, Western Sahara is one of the most contaminated territories in the world.

Inclement weather conditions also pose a challenge to landmines/ERW clearance teams operating in the territory. Heavy wind, sandstorms along with high temperatures (up to 60 degrees Celsius) cause temporary cessations of mine action activities yearly. Sandstorms and rain can also move, bury or reveal landmines/ERW (UNMAS 2017).

Points d'appui and Points d'observation

There are several *points d'appui* placed in the first line of the Separation Barrier the role of which is to repel any possible Sahrawi attack from its beginning and to take care of the daily maintenance of the berm. Each *point d'appui* includes around 100 – 110 soldiers (Nah Bachir 2017, 124). Subordinate to the aforesaid unit, and also placed in the first line of the wall, there are *points d'observation*. These are smaller units that are responsible for the daily management of the obstacles of the wall. They include around 30- 40 soldiers (*ibid.*,125).

Besides the soldiers of both the *points d'appui* and the *points d'observation*, the Moroccan Separation Barrier is also guarded by the Moroccan Rapid Intervention Forces, placed in the second line of the wall that are prepared for resisting stronger attacks and the rearguard units (*ibid.*,126).

Buffer strip and restricted areas

The Separation Barrier is the axis from which the space surrounding it is organized. The Military Agreement number 1, signed between the POLISARIO and the MINURSO (December 24th, 1997) and the Moroccan Army and the MINURSO (January 22nd, 1998) established a 5km

buffer strip east and south of the berm, two restricted areas of 30km and 25km west and east of the berm respectively and two areas with limited restrictions on both sides of the berm including the remainder Western Sahara (MINURSO 2017). The 5km buffer zone is included in the eastern restricted area and the Separation Barrier is included in the western restricted area.

Observation tools: radar systems and planes

Morocco has used different models of sophisticated radar devices to control the Separation Barrier (Rasic, Ratac, Stentor...). The information coming from these radar systems is complemented by the aerial information provided by specialized planes that overfly the territory (Nah Bachir 2017, 140).

The reinforcement of the barrier structure over the years with different mechanisms and devices has caused a continuous militarization of the border. The sophistication of the technologies used to manage the frontier space proves that the Separation Barrier in Western Sahara cannot be understood only as a defensive structure anymore, but also as a tool for unilateral territorial management and national design of borders. The barrier, as it happens in the Palestinian context, does not demarcate a static limit. Even though the construction of the Moroccan Separation Barrier and the following ceasefire period made the Moroccan-Sahrawi conflict become somehow stagnant, as Nah Bachir has argued (2017), the wall remains a flexible and dynamic machine for land annexation and it represents the ability of Morocco to develop and reinforce its national project.

The desert

The desert is not a planned component of the border. It is the landscape where the border has been built, its emplacement. However, the desert plays an important role in the way the border happens in Western Sahara. Paola Suárez Ávila also talks about the desert as a component of the US-México border: “También la frontera mexicano-americana, como espacio geográfico, ha sido identificada con el desierto” (2007, 29). In Western Sahara, the existence of the desert means that the distance between the border and any other inhabited place is huge. This implies that the border is far away from the quotidian lives of the people against whom the border has been built. The architectural structure is now only inhabited by the Moroccan forces that defend it and it is sometimes visited by Sahrawi people or by activists that want to see it. The distance that separates the border from Sahrawi bodies implies that the wall is present in the refugee camps and the occupied territories as an image, as a memory. It is not physically present –contrary to what happens in the Palestinian case–. However, it does not imply that the Moroccan Separation Barrier is absent from life. The wall conditions the Sahrawi people to remain divided.

The desert and its dynamics also determine the position of the landmines that surround it. Thus, the desert is the component of the border that makes the Separation Barrier spread over the territory and, therefore, makes it become uncertain.

Finally, the severe conditions of the desert makes it possible for this environment to work as an obstacle in itself. The desert is one of the most important parts of the wall. There is no need for more sophisticated components for the structure of the Separation Barrier. Its emplacement becomes an ally. There is no need for a more complex structure.

➔ PROCESSES

Erasing certain borders and reinforcing others

Bennafla describes how the three borders of Western Sahara are differently addressed in cartographic representations of Morocco due to political reasons. The author argues that the line that usually represents the geographical limit of the territory of Western Sahara in the north (a line drawn up during the Spanish colonial rule that runs on parallel 27° 40') is usually erased from Moroccan maps with the aim of making the Sahrawi question invisible. “L’invisibilité de la frontière entre le Sahara occidental et le royaume est en effet voulue par Rabat et participe d’une position de négation d’un territoire sahraoui” (Bennafla 2013). This situation on the north border totally differs from what happens on the south-eastern border:

Rendue invisible au Nord, la frontière du Sahara occidental est à l’inverse matérialisée à l’Est, selon un axe oblique, parallèle à la frontière algérienne. Cette autre frontière, surnommée le *berm* s’est imposée dans les représentations cartographiques. La fonction militarodéfensive qui lui était assignée lors de sa construction a muté au fil des décennies, avec l’intégration *de facto* du Sahara occidental au royaume marocain. La fonction actuelle du *berm* semble davantage être celle d’un glacis protecteur à l’abri duquel les autorités de Rabat s’emploient à consolider un état de fait difficilement réversible (Bennafla 2009).

The cartographic representation of this south-eastern border is specially highlighted with the aim of reinforcing the national image of the Moroccan kingdom. These differences on the (non)representation of both lines on maps is aimed to perform a simple reality: the northern border does not exist, whereas the south-eastern border does exist. The existence of the northern border and the nonexistence of the south-eastern one directly implies Western Sahara disappears from the official national Moroccan imaginary. Morocco appears as a continuous territory that ends in the Separation Barrier (*berm*). Finally, as Bennafla describes, there is a third border between Western Sahara and Mauritania characterized by its porosity:

Le Sahara occidental est un territoire disputé et ourlé de frontières diverses quant à leurs fonctions et leur matérialisation. La frontière linéaire reconnue par l’ONU qui borde au nord le Sahara occidental a été gommée sur le terrain mais elle resurgit ailleurs et autrement sous l’effet des migrations marocaines internes. Cette frontière invisible au nord tranche avec la frontière orientale, fermée et ‘barriérisée’, et avec

la frontière méridionale, poreuse et dynamisée par des circulations avec la Mauritanie (Bennafla 2013).

Touristification of Western Sahara

Making Western Sahara and the conflict invisible does not only consist of erasing and reinforcing certain lines, but also of a process of trivializing the Sahrawi question. This is possible thanks to the Moroccan campaign of development in Western Sahara based on tourism:

L'originalité du cas sahraoui tient sans doute à l'entreprise marocaine de promotion culturelle et touristique de l'espace au statut contesté : la mise en tourisme du Sahara, sa banalisation comme lieu de destination de loisirs (à l'échelle internationale) visent à faire oublier le conflit, dépolitiser la question sahraouie et attester des efforts marocains pour le développement régional de cet espace périphérique (Bennafla 2013).

The strategy of touristification of the conflict implies two main objectives. The first one has to do with the image of Morocco in the international field. The region of Souss Sahara Atlantique is then shown by the Ministère du Tourisme of Morocco as an oasis of sun, beaches, palm trees, spas and archaeological remains where tourists can enjoy their holidays. The second objective has to do with the image of Morocco inside Morocco. The touristification of the region is shown as an economic engine for development and the creation of new jobs:

Le tourisme contribue largement à la création de richesses et à la diminution du chômage et de la pauvreté avec une demande touristique globale représentant environ 12% du PIB. Le secteur est également un excellent pourvoyeur en emplois avec 507, 000 emplois directs qui correspondent à près de 5% de l'emploi dans l'ensemble de l'économie (Royaume du Maroc. Ministère du Tourisme 2017).

The process of touristification is also developing as a strategy for solidarity with the Sahrawi people. From the Sahrawi point of view, there is a need of showing the wall and make international visitors tell the story to their compatriots when coming back to their homes. This necessity of making the wall visible may imply some disadvantages, though. In a period of time when *solidary holidays* are becoming increasingly popular, visiting the wall may become but a mere activity that can be documented by taking a selfie in front of the architectural structure.

Invisibilization of the Separation Barrier

The Moroccan Separation Barrier lacks from visibility. It is neither a topic for debate nor a space pictured by the mass media. The fact that the Moroccan Separation Barrier is not visible internationally either as a topic or as an image implies it does not exist in the collective imagination. Thus, the invisibilization of its existence implies a series of ontological consequences: the nonexistence of the wall as an object of debate implies its nonexistence as an object in itself. Its existence is but mythological: there are only a few people that have heard about it. And there are even less people that have seen it. Because of that, the Moroccan Separation Barrier is not considered as a real source of danger that causes damage. It becomes a mere idea without any physical body related to it.

Isolation of the border

As it has been already said, the Moroccan Separation Barrier is placed in the desert. This means that it is isolated from any other populated area. The isolation of the structure contributes to its invisibilization and also to its trivialization: since it does not cause *normative* violence on daily life (meaning blocking routines, choreographing movements...), it is considered as an obsolete artifact that is placed in the middle of nowhere and has no impact on bodies. It seems as if this wall deserved no attention from the analysis on contemporary borders. As if it was placed outside of space and time.

3. BORDERS EVERYWHERE

The Israeli and the Moroccan Separation Barriers must be understood as spaces that are being produced in relation to a broader context characterized by the global proliferation of walls. The objective of this section is to describe some of the situations that this fortification is causing.

➔ THE BORDERIZATION OF THE ARAB REGION

The proliferation of border physical barriers is happening everywhere, The Arab region is being bordered (or fortified) as well. However, the borderization of this region (and the sub-regions inside it) is defined by specific characteristics. Said Saddiki starts his article “The Fortification of the Arab States’ Borders in the Sub-Regional contexts” (2018) with an historical approach to borders in the Arab region: “Except for walls built on the perimeters of the old cities to protect them from attacks of invaders and looters, the pre-colonial Arab world was almost entirely open and with no internal borders because it was governed, most of the time, by large empires” (Saddiki 2018, 147). And he continues by arguing that “during the colonial period, some colonial authorities erected fences along some borders” (*ibid.*). Finally, in recent times “the Arab region has witnessed a growing number of border barriers over the past two decades due to the new security challenges facing the region, making the Arab world the most walled region in the world” (*ibid.*).

Although immigration is one of the reasons why borders are being fortified in this area, the main function of most of the barriers is aimed to “stop infiltration of armed groups and arms smuggling” (*ibid.*, 149). However, the existence of an increasing number of border architectural devices can be also understood as a means to reinforce the line that defines the nation-state. Saddiki argues in his article that, far from moving towards a borderless land, the Arab region is

experiencing a re-intensification of the state as the administrative/political/social actor. Thus, “the fortification of borders of Arab countries borders can also be regarded as a means to legitimize their existence.” (*ibid.*, 158).

Finally, the construction of barriers is due to the specific dynamics that define the regional subsystems:

In terms of existing regional subsystems, external determinants are the most important reasons for the current fortification of Arab borders. Moreover, these factors are closely related to the nature of existing regional subsystems, especially the Maghreb and the Middle East. Most of these fortifications reflect the mutual suspicion and fear among neighboring Arab countries and their inability to agree on common ways to secure their borders. This anarchical and confused situation has prompted many countries in the region to unilaterally secure their borders with more physical and virtual fortifications. In addition to the reasons mentioned above, there are two important historical factors that have created the ground for this turbulent and anarchical regional situation: First, the arbitrary demarcation of the territorial borders by the colonial powers and, secondly, the way in which the post-colonial Arab states were constructed (*ibid.*, 158).

➔ THE INTERIORIZATION OF BORDERS: IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTERS – CENTROS DE INTERNAMIENTO DE EXTRANJEROS (CIEs) – SPAIN

The Immigration Detention Centers (CIEs – Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros) are public spaces for administrative preventive detention of illegal immigrants. There are currently seven CIEs in Spain: Aluche (Madrid), La Piñera (Algeciras), Zapadores (Valencia), Zona Franca (Barcelona), Sangonera La Verde (Murcia), Barranco Seco (Las Palmas) and El Matorral (Fuerteventura). This type of centers⁸ were created in 1985 as a consequence of the Immigration Law and they depend on the Spanish Interior Ministry. Despite the fact that they usually work as prisons, they are officially not conceived as penitentiary centers as it is established in the Real Decreto 162/2014 of March 14th that describes the regulation of CIEs, published in the Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE):

Los centros de internamiento de extranjeros aparecen por vez primera en nuestro ordenamiento jurídico en el artículo 26 de la Ley Orgánica 7/1985, de 1 de julio, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España, que contempla la posibilidad de que el juez de instrucción acuerde, como medida cautelar vinculada a la sustanciación o ejecución de un expediente de expulsión, el internamiento, a disposición judicial, de extranjeros en locales que no tengan carácter penitenciario (BOE 2014, 23236).

Immigrants can be confined in these centers for a maximum of sixty days and during their detention they are deprived of their right to movement (BOE 2014, 23236). The official goal in detaining immigrants in CIEs is to deport them to their countries but, as many organizations for

8 There are similar centers in other countries such as Italy (Centri di Identificazione ed Espulsione - Identification and Expulsion Centers), UK (Immigration Removal Centers) or France (Centres de Rétention Administrative – Administrative Detention Centers).

immigrants' rights, such as SOS Racismo, have argued, this is not the real objective. Despite many immigrants are actually deported, the detention of people in CIEs is more a mechanism for fear management, population control and symbolic punishment (stigmatization, separation from families, etc.) since it is usual for immigrants to finally be freed after the two months period of confinement has expired. Many immigrants are even detained and freed several times.

Cabe recordar que el internamiento en el CIE tiene un carácter cautelar, preventivo, es decir que se concreta en la privación de un derecho fundamental como es la libertad ambulatoria con el fin de asegurar la expulsión del territorio. Sin embargo, los CIE cuentan con una infraestructura y una gestión absolutamente penitenciarias. Además de esto y teniendo en cuenta el número de personas que son finalmente deportadas, podemos afirmar que estos centros tienen una función represiva, funcionan como castigo a la irregularidad, para atemorizar y estigmatizar (SOS Racismo 2015, 7).

The Real Decreto 162/2014 does not only contain a description of the way a CIE works, but also a description of how a CIE must be organized physically. In other words, the architecture of CIEs is legislated (BOE 2014, 23243-23244). But, even though there is a detailed description of how CIEs must be and work and an official concern about immigrants, there are actually many flagrant violations of their rights. The 2015 Annual Report published by the Mecanismo Nacional de Prevención de la Tortura (MNP) stresses the importance of taking care of certain issues with the aim of guaranteeing and respecting immigrants' rights. Their report, for example, describes that there is still no psychological assistance for immigrants in the centers they visited; in some of them there is also a lack of permanent medical presence, which makes it even more difficult to fight the humidity and cold, etc. The MNP also stresses the importance of guaranteeing a fluid and good way of communication by making sure different languages are spoken in the CIEs in order to respect immigrants' rights and necessities, and suggests to report the injuries caused to them by following the Defensor del Pueblo recommendations (MNP 2015).

The existence of CIEs implies that barriers are not only physically built on the border lines that demarcate the geographic limits of a country, they are also built inside the national territories with the aim of expand the border also indoors and make it become an area instead of a simple line:

Las fronteras no están solo en lugares lejanos entre Estados, en las costas o en puestos fronterizos. Las fronteras están en el interior de nuestras ciudades y de nuestros barrios, se materializan en los CIE, en redadas racistas, en los vuelos de deportación, en la exclusión sanitaria o en papeles denegados. Pero sobre todo, las fronteras están en las cabezas de quienes construyen un nosotros distinto de un ellos, en quienes gobiernan y se lucran con políticas discriminatorias, racistas y violentas, en quienes eligen mirar hacia otro lado, discriminar mediante sus actitudes y comportamientos racistas (SOS Racismo 2015, 1).

The existence of CIEs and the mechanisms linked to them, such as the deportation flights, the racist raids or the endless bureaucratic requirements for regularization, implies the border is active in any Spanish neighborhood. In fact, the SOS Racismo organization entitled their 2015 CIE

Report “Fronteras en los barrios” (Borders in the neighborhoods) because of this reason, as Clara García, member of the organization, explained in an interview (February 27th, 2017):

Las líneas que separan los países dejan de ser estáticas y se transforman en procesos tanto materiales como simbólicos que generan en todo el territorio y más allá de él, qué personas forman parte del Nosotras y qué personas forman parte del Ellas. Las fronteras se reproducen constantemente en un conjunto de prácticas conectadas entre sí.

The border is not static anymore, its existence is rather echoed, reproduced and replicated by a multiplicity of legal, administrative, physical, ritual, social and discursive devices. The border pierces the bodies, experiences, practices and subjectivities of everyone: those classified as the dangerous immigrants or refugees (called *they*) and those classified as the ones to be protected (called *we*). The border is embodied by the bodies of *illegal* and *racialized* immigrants; and these bodies, stigmatized as they are, sometimes become the only contact that European citizens have with the border.

➔ THE EXTERNALIZATION OF BORDERS: CEUTA AND MELILLA'S FENCES, THE US – MEXICO WALL, WALLS AGAINST REFUGEES IN EUROPE.

If, as it has just been described, borders expand and occupy the indoors area of countries, it is also true that they expand outdoors and run beyond border lines. In other words, they become extraterritorial. The Spanish Ceuta and Melilla's fences, the US – Mexico wall or the walls and fences that are being built in several European countries (Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece) with the aim of avoiding the arrival of refugees –mostly from Syria– are examples of this process of extraterritorialization and externalization of borders. This means, the existence of such walls does not only depend on the physical construction of architectural structures, they also depend on bilateral deals and negotiations with other countries. The Ceuta and Melilla's fences depend on the collaboration with the Moroccan units as the 2015 Joint Report “Ceuta y Melilla, centros de selección a cielo abierto a las puertas de África” written by several organizations (AMDH Nador, APDHA, La Cimade, GADEM, Migreurop and SOS Racismo) shows; the US border paradoxically depends on the Mexican role as a wide barrier and a massive deportation device that does not allow people from southern countries, such as El Salvador or Guatemala, to get into the US, as the Mexican journalist Daniel Montero shows in his special program for *Animal Político* on the Mexican southern border; and the European Union (EU) has externalized European borders thanks to agreements with countries such as Turkey (EU- Turkey Statement of March 18th, 2016). This kind of bilateral agreements for the *fight against immigration* and the *securitization of the North*, makes some areas such as the whole Moroccan, Mexican and Turkish territories or the cities of Ceuta and Melilla (as well as other geographical areas such as the Mediterranean Sea)

become cages where immigrants and refugees get trapped: They get trapped in the border itself, in the borderland, as Gloria E. Anzaldúa would call it.

However, the externalization of borders does not only consist of a political strategy, but also an economic one. Understanding the politics of economic links between states and the companies that build the physical walls or the companies that organize the different practices that the new bordered and fortified countries require (deportation flights, for example) is key to draw the panoramic or wide picture of borders.

In the EU, one of the most beneficiaries of the market of borders is the company Indra, which, in its own web-page, shows its pride of being the provider of surveillance and security systems and structures for more than 5,000km of border lines in different countries all over the world (Indra 2017). In the Indra web-page one can also read the details of one of its projects: the installation of sensor devices in 65km of the Bulgaria – Turkey border. As for the deportation flights, in the EU, several deportation flights are organized by FRONTEX (European Border and Coast Guard Agency) in collaboration with certain European states, as described by the Campaña Estatal por el Cierre de los CIE in their book *Paremos los vuelos. Las deportaciones de inmigrantes y el boicot a Air Europa* (2014). Others, are organized by the states themselves. For example, in Spain, some of the deportation flights have been organized by FRONTEX and others by the Comisaría General de Extranjería y Frontera (CGEF) (SOS Racismo 2015, 5). Until November 2016 there was a contract signed between Spain and the companies Air Europa and Swift Air of almost 12, 000,000€ to organize these deportation flights. The contract is now signed with the company Air Nostrum (BOE, November 25th, 2016).

➔ THE WIDE PICTURE: WHAT DO BORDERS HAVE IN COMMON?

Évelyne Ritaine distinguishes between three main types of walls that are currently being developed in her article “La barrière et le checkpoint: mise en politique de l’asymétrie” (2009): the fortified border (for example, between Spain – Morocco and US – Mexico), the securized and militarized ceasefire lines (as in the West Bank and Western Sahara) and the urban gated communities (private residential or recreational areas) (Ritaine 2009, 18). Since each type of border is aimed to pursue different goals, each one would require a specific type of analysis:

Ces dispositifs de contrôle affichent donc toujours une fonction sécuritaire, dont les fins explicites – civiles, militaires ou sociales – sont différentes, quoique souvent emboîtées. Ils sont susceptibles d’une analyse spécifique à chacun, celle d’une sociologie politique des frontières, celle d’une géopolitique des contestations territoriales, celle d’une sociologie de la ségrégation urbaine. Cependant, peut-être ont-ils en commun une fonction de séparation politique inédite et révélatrice des tensions contemporaines dans le contexte de la globalisation. En les considérant tous comme des processus de blindage d’une limite

territorialisée, destinés à contrôler la circulation des personnes, que peut-on apprendre du sens politique de ce geste de séparation, de ce Mur politique 10 ? Une des façons de réfléchir à ce sens politique, bien que non exclusive 11, est de considérer le Mur comme une mise en politique de l'asymétrie et d'en décliner toutes les conséquences (Ritaine 2009, 19).

However, it is possible to talk about certain general and shared trends that are characteristic of what could be named as the contemporary border. Some of the main characteristics of this contemporary border are:

- **Its elasticity:** Border barriers are not only made of fixed or immovable structures (concrete walls, trenches or fences). They are also made of soft and movable structures. An example is the West Bank temporary checkpoints that can appear or disappear wherever and whenever. The border then becomes a fluid system instead of an inanimate structure that actually moves and develops as an organism, which makes its behavior become somehow unpredictable.
- **Its expansiveness:** The border and its management does not happen in the space of *the line* anymore, but in an area that can expand several kilometers. The image of the line is obsolete:

The traditional image of borders is still inscribed onto maps in which discrete sovereign territories are separated by lines and marked by different colors. This image has been produced by the modern history of the state, and we must always be aware of its complexities. Just to make an example, migration control has only quite recently become a prominent function of political borders. At the same time, historicizing the development of linear borders means to be aware of the risks of a naturalization of a specific image of the border (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 3).

There are countries, for example, that, thanks to the existence of bilateral agreements, work as part of the border itself. It is the case of Mexico, that becomes part of the border between US and a global south; or Morocco, that has become one of the border sections between Europe and Africa. However, the expansion of the border does not only depends on a process of externalization. It is also the result of a process of interiorization. The Spanish CIEs are an example of this interiorization of borders. The existence of these centers, placed in several locations of the country, allows the border to never end, the centers become an appendix or annex of the Ceuta and Melilla's fences, of the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. This means the border does not finish once one has successfully climbed a wall or crossed the sea. The border is always there, boundless. Paradoxically, there are no borders for borders and the world becomes a world-frontier, as Évelyne Ritaine argues, "l'espace global est tout entier devenu une 'zone frontière'" (Ritaine 2009, 16). Thus, the expansiveness of borders has produced a *fronterization of the world*.

- **Its planned porosity or permeability:** Despite their impregnable appearance, the barriers

built on borders can actually be crossed. Borders are not completely impregnable places: they are controlled and militarized doorsteps where the act of crossing the line is precisely planned and managed. The existence of checkpoints makes the border become a colander that includes some holes where bodies are carefully analyzed, studied and selected. These holes are also the place where bureaucracy, negotiation and arbitrariness come into play. Ritaine also thinks about the important role of checkpoints in the configuration of the wall and the way they become the main device for control:

La barrière a une simple fonction d'obstacle: ce qui importe, dans le Mur, c'est le *checkpoint*, qui signifie arrêt et contrôle; en assurant l'interconnexion des différents processus de surveillance, c'est le *checkpoint*, bien plus que la barrière, qui fait exister le pouvoir de contrôle. Ce pouvoir de contrôle s'exerce sur les déplacements des personnes : il limite arbitrairement, et sans recours possible, la liberté de circulation de certains, en fonction de leur statut (Ritaine 2009, 27).

And Karine Bennafla clearly exemplifies this power of control that is performed at checkpoints by explaining how it works in the Moroccan *berm*:

Plusieurs brèches existent le long des lignes dunaires par lesquelles le Polisario lançait des raids dans les années 1980, donnant lieu à des accrochages qui pouvaient engendrer un droit de suite par les soldats marocains, après l'aval du roi Hassan II. Outre les va-et-vient de la Minurso, il convient également de mentionner les visites familiales organisées depuis 2004 par le Haut commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés (HCR). Des vols réguliers entre les camps de réfugiés de Tindouf et le territoire saharien sous contrôle marocain permettent en effet la réunion temporaire de familles. Mais le processus est régulièrement interrompu et le nombre de bénéficiaires limité (16.889 entre 2004 et fin 2011), alors que des milliers de personnes (48.252) sont inscrits sur des listes d'attente (Bennafla 2013).

However, even if the holes in the borders are carefully planned, there are also unplanned doors. As Élisabeth Vallet and Charles-Philippe David argue in their article "Introduction: The (Re)Building of the Wall in International Relations" (2012) walls "must be regarded not only as physical barriers but also as gateways, for they are punctured by official and unofficial openings through which people can cross from one side to the other" (Vallet and David 2012, 112).

- **Its *smartization*:** Walls include electronic and digital devices that improve the ability of borders to control movement. The concept of being *smart* is indeed not avoided to talk about how borders are currently being updated. The Smart Borders Package, for example, consists of a series of measures and technical changes that are being applied by the European Commission "to improve the management of the external borders of the Schengen Member States, fight against irregular immigration and provide information on overstayers, as well as facilitate border crossings for pre-vetted frequent third country national (TCN) travellers" (European Commission 2017). This is the age of smart telephones, smart cities and smart

borders.

- **Its choreopolicing objective:** There are certain allowed ways of moving in the border and there are certain allowed ways of bodily being in the wall. The list of rules, protocols and circulation signals that are carefully controlled by different trained units (police, army, administrative workers) and devices (cameras, sensors) produce an imposed choreografication of movement. This is what André Lepecki calls choreopolice.
- **Its bureaucratic machinery:** The border works thanks to the existence of a colossal amount of administrative requirements. The body that crosses the line does not only have to be, move and behave in a normative way. It has also to be accompanied by the required official forms, documents and certificates. If not, the only way of crossing will consist of skipping the rules. “L’histoire du Mur est une histoire d’accès, contrôle de l’accès, inégalités d’accès: il faut avoir le mot de passe, le code, les moyens financiers, le 'bon' statut, etc., ou bien transgresser l’ordre établi par le Mur” (Ritaine 2009, 32).
- **Its colonial rhetoric:** As it has already been said the physical existence of borders (barriers, walls, fences, berms...) also depends on the performance of different practices such as bureaucratic procedures or choreopolicing strategies of movement and management of movement. But it also depends on the *modern/colonial rhetoric*. This last concept has been widely developed by Walter D. Mignolo in several of his works such as “Geopolitics of Sensing and Knowing: On (De)Coloniality, Border Thinking, and Epistemic Disobedience” (2011) or *Desobediencia Epistémica: Retórica de la Modernidad, Lógica de la Colonialidad y Gramática de la Descolonialidad* (2010). Modernity and coloniality are the two faces of the same coin, as several decolonial authors have argued (Quijano, Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel, Sousa Santos, Mignolo, Adlbi Sibai). The rhetoric of modernity shapes the grammar of current colonial discourses on borders. This colonial way of *saying* the border is closely linked to the discursive, theoretical and conceptual construction of *the other*. “Who invented 'the other' if not *the same* in the process of constructing *the same*? Such an invention is the outcome of an enunciation. The enunciation doesn’t name an existing entity, but invents it” (Mignolo 2011). The invention of *the other* as a necessity for the existence of *the same* is also the invention of *the outside* with the aim of clearly define *the inside*. But, who invents all these concepts? Of course, they are not the result of a consensus or a negotiation among different parts. As Said Saddiki maintains, “walls are never built against an equivalent power” (Saddiki 2017, 4). These concepts and structures are coined and produced unilaterally by those that link themselves to *the same* and *the inside*: those who *can* talk. “It is necessary to be in a position of managing the discourse

(verbal, visual, audial) by which you name and describe an entity” (Mignolo 2011). In the same way, Ritaine argues that the physical barriers that reinforce the border and fortify *the inside* are also built unilaterally based on the existence of an asymmetric socioeconomic and political context (US – Mexico, Europe – Africa...): “c’est cette asymétrie fondamentale, révélée par le caractère unilatéral de la décision d’érection et par les effets arbitraires de l’exclusion, qui caractérise la politique du Mur” (Ritaine 2009, 19). The objective in both unilaterally inventing *the other* (Mignolo) and unilaterally building walls (Ritaine) is the same: “enfermer dehors' les indésirables” (Ritaine 2009, 19). This rhetoric of the modernity/coloniality as well as the fact of being able to build walls depend on a wider web of colonial interrelationships called by Mignolo the *colonial matrix of power*. The main strategy to get out of this matrix is *delinking* from colonial objects, practices and discourses which would make it possible to create “exteriorities in space and time” (Mignolo 2011). Or, in other words, delinking would make these exteriorities or peripheries of the *known* become visible and existing. Delinking from the colonial rhetoric on borders and from the logic of borders itself, therefore, would make it possible for those *others* that inhabit *the outside* become agents and visible beings. So, even though the colonial matrix of power allows certain actors to act unilaterally, there is always an opportunity for dissent and non-normative ways of acting. As Ritaine argues when talking about the construction of walls:

Elle est donc toujours unilatérale: elle dénie toute possibilité de négociation avec une partie équivalente, quand elle ne cherche pas à nier l’existence même d’une autre partie, comme dans les stratégies israélienne et marocaine. Elle émane toujours de l’acteur puissant : elle signe un arbitraire et le déséquilibre –voire l’absence– de l’échange politique ou de l’échange social. Aussi le Mur est-il toujours contesté, même quand il est érigé sur une frontière officielle ou sur une propriété privée. L’autre côté considère toujours que, si politique de sécurisation il doit y avoir, elle devrait être bilatérale (Ritaine 2009, 21).

And this contestation or delinking from the normative way of being in the wall is also visible in the way walls are named, or in the rhetoric: “puisque le Mur n’est jamais nommé de la même façon des deux côtés: 'barrière de sécurité' en Israël, 'mur d’annexion' ou 'mur d’apartheid' pour les Palestiniens; 'mur de sécurité' au Maroc, 'mur de la honte' pour les Sahraouis; 'border fence' aux Etats-Unis, 'linea fatale' ou 'il muro' pour les Mexicains, etc.” (Ritaine 2009, 22).

This colonial rhetoric will be further developed in chapter 3.

- **Its border subjectivity:** The whole colonial matrix of power that works in frontier contexts also produces a certain subjectivity that we can call a border subjectivity. Boaventura de Sousa Santos reflects on this type of subjectivity in his book *Crítica de la Razón Indolente. Contra el Desperdicio de la Experiencia. Volumen I* (2003) and he does it to refer to both

those who inhabit the symbolic borders (collectives whose ontology is located at the edge of the center or the norm) and those who inhabit border spaces. Despite the Sousa Santos' very wide definition, this concept of the border subjectivity can also be applied to talk specifically about the type of subjects that arise from a physical border (walls, fences, berms...) experience. Sousa Santos explains that the living-in-the-border produces new strategies for sociability that are based on vulnerability, weaker hierarchies (among the members that are identified as border-subjects) and the desire of being and participating in a community, which makes the border-subject find a *home* wherever s/he is and enjoy every single expression of community s/he finds in the borderlands (Sousa Santos 2003, 402). This is why the border subjectivity can be characterized by some kind of altruism and solidarity. These practices of commonality, altruism and solidarity are here addressed not as an attempt to romanticize the concept of border subjectivity, but to argue that they become a necessity for border-subjects to survive and therefore an intrinsic quality of this type of subjectivity. “Sea cual sea la forma que pueda asumir, la experiencia de los límites es una experiencia existencial intensa. En la frontera, esa experiencia, sea individual o colectiva, es vivida de un modo comunitario” (*ibid.*, 406). Of course, there is another border subjectivity that is the one that arises in the other side of the wall: that one linked to the colonial subject that emphasizes words such as *terrorism* and *security* to justify the construction of barriers. This subjectivity is also shared as a social and common feeling based on fear that highlights the necessity of border physical structures. In chapter 3 this question will be further problematized.

- **Its theatricality, ist scenographicality and its performativity:** The border becomes a supreme structure in the collective imaginary that recalls the way the gigantic ice wall that divides the civilized people of the Seven Kingdoms from the wildlings of the Free Folk and the Others (or White Walkers) is exaggeratedly represented in the George R. R. Martin saga, *A Song of Ice and Fire* and the book-based series *Game of Thrones*. This idea of monumentality is developed by Ritaine when stating that “le Mur s’écrit ainsi au superlatif: des technologies toujours plus performantes, des murailles toujours plus hautes, des contrôles toujours plus sophistiqués, toujours plus de gardiens et de financements... Toujours plus: cette monumentalité, cette théâtralité sont les signes de sa qualité performative” (Ritaine 2009, 27). Eyal Weizman also stressed the performativity of the wall but not only addressing its monumentality, as Ritaine does, but also referring to its ability to function as a planned scenography. As a result of these processes, the wall somehow becomes an spectacle, something that appears to be unreal but that actually exists.
- **Its baroque mode-of-being:** It is impossible to describe the border accurately. There is

always something that has not been described yet, something that has not been described well, or something that has not been described enough. Eric Hazan refers to the impossibility of describing the wall of Palestine in his book *Notes sur l'occupation. Naplouse, Kalkilyia, Hébron* (2006): “I'm aware that I am describing with difficulty a complex arrangement” (Hazan 2007, 43)⁹. And he adds afterwards “one should not think of a 'wall'”, but of a *complex* {wall + settlements + prohibited roads + closed military zones + checkpoints}” (*ibid.*, 90) This impossibility of describing the border is due to its baroque mode-of-being. The border is a system of folds, as Deleuze would have defined it. It is a system of elements that are ones on/between/inside/etc the others.

- **Its multiple ways of working.** Borders are not devices for exclusion. They have become devices for social management: “[...] borders, far from serving simply to block or obstruct global flows, have become essential devices for their articulation. In so doing, borders have not just proliferated. They are also undergoing complex transformations [...]” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 3).
- **Its similarities.** Each borderscape implies a series of particularities. Each case is different, each case is singular. However, there are several similarities between them. “Attentiveness to the historical and geographical significance of individual borders does not disqualify an approach that isolates particular aspects of a situation and lets them resonate with what takes place in very different spatial and temporal zones” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 9). These similarities are not only the result of the development of similar circumstances in different contexts, but also the application of similar strategies in the designing of borders. Let's look, for example, at how some authors compare the Israeli Bar-Lev line and the Moroccan series of walls.

The development of such kind of borders produce a *militarization of contiguity* (Ritaine 2009, 22). This means it is not possible to inhabit the space without unpredictably being interrupted. And these interruptions are never incidental consequences caused by the random development of life. Interruptions and obstacles are part of a militarization strategy that is applied to manage space just as varnish is used to coat wood.

Another goal that is achieved by the development of this spatial militarization of contiguity is to avoid any claim of sovereignty. The Palestinian and the Sahrawi territories have been divided, militarized and, some of them, occupied (a complex process that took many years to develop and that is still being developed), which makes it increasingly difficult to define the *country*. Palestinians and Sahrawis live in the exile, in refugee camps, in occupied territories or in *their* land (but sometimes as foreigners, as exiled people). They are dispersed in the same way how the

⁹ Translated by George Holoch, *Notes on Occupation. Palestinian Lives* (2007), The New Press.

Palestinian and Sahrawi territories are somehow dispersed. To this should be added that not all the members of the international community recognize Palestine and Western Sahara as countries, which makes any attempt to negotiate even more complicated. Therefore, it can be concluded that spatial strategies lead not only to an obstaculization and exclusion of certain people, but also to the achievement of specific (geo)political objectives.

Finally, the militarization of contiguity implies a series of eco-social consequences. The landscape and its ecosocial systems (including flora, fauna and social and economic human relationships) are modified. Even if it is not the main objective of this research to delve into the impact that the construction of border-barriers have on ecosystems, it is necessary to mention this problem with the aim of providing an image of the complexity of this process of barrierization. Studies such as the one conducted by John D. C. Linnell et al., who wrote the article “Border Security Fencing and Wildlife: The End of the Transboundary Paradigm in Eurasia?” (2016), demonstrates that the construction of security fences in Europe “represent a mayor threat to wildlife.” They argue that the construction of fences and walls for security reasons is producing a fragmentation of the routes that some animals such as the brown bear, the gray wolf or the lynx follow (between Serbia and Croatia, for example). Certain types of barriers, such as livestock fences, have had a positive impact on biodiversity conservation in certain cases and contexts, but security fences have destroyed the trans-boundary paradigm for the preservation of wildlife. “It is somewhat ironic that for the last 15 years, while conservation biologists have been largely promoting transboundary management and celebrating localised examples of fence removal, the global trend has been for an unprecedented increase in barriers preventing wildlife from moving across borders” (Linnell et al. 2016). Decisions such as where to place security barriers or how to build them (design, structure) are made without taking into account any ecosocial consequence. This is due to the fact that they are built because of *security* reasons, which are prioritized over any other reason, as Arie Trouwborst, Floor Fleurke and Jennifer Dubrulle explain in “Border Fences and their Impacts on Large Carnivores, Large Herbivores and Biodiversity: An International Wildlife Law Perspective” (2016):

Nevertheless, the present article focuses exclusively on border fences, for various reasons. For highways, railroads and similar infrastructural projects, impacts on biodiversity are often considered as part of the planning process, and mitigated through measures like animal crossing structures or wildlife-friendly fence design. For border fences, things tend to be different. Whereas they, too, may cut through wildlife habitat over huge distances, border fences are meant to be impenetrable – for people, to be sure, but as a consequence also for many animals, especially large-bodied ones – and wildlife overpasses are generally incompatible with this purpose. In addition, the construction of border fences tends to be motivated by security concerns that are considered paramount over most other considerations. This means that any potential impacts on wildlife may not be contemplated in decision making, or simply be taken for granted. Thus, national environmental legislation which might impede or delay a border fence’s construction may

be inapplicable, overruled or just ignored, to the effect that no environmental impact assessment (EIA) or strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is made and protected species legislation is not applied (Trouwborst, Fleurke and Dubrulle 2016, 292).

Although both articles written by Linnell et al., and Trouwborst, Fleurke and Dubrulle respectively do not address the relationship between the damage produced on wildlife and the damage produced on ecology and human populations, it has to be noticed that societies depend on the material context they inhabit, on the ecosystem, and that any damage on any element of that system implies a series of consequences. Barriers imply a fragmentation of space, which does not only make it increasingly difficult for animals to move, but it also obstructs human access to many natural resources (Sahrawi refugees and those living in the Free Zone, for example, do not have access to phosphates) or imposes a great pressure over other resources (this is what happens both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, where the pressure over the soil is increasing due to the Israeli policies that impose restrictions to the Palestinians' movement and access to the land, and the population growth). Barriers also cause a restriction of movement for certain nomadic communities whose lives depend on transhumance (both in Palestine and Western Sahara). The presence or absence of certain animals caused by the construction of fences and the militarization of space, then, does also alter ecosocial relationships. For example, Gabriele Volpato and Patricia Howard, in their article "The material and cultural recovery of camels and camel husbandry among Sahrawi refugees of Western Sahara" (2014) explain the way how camels and the practice of camel husbandry almost disappeared after the Moroccan occupation of a great part of Western Sahara in 1975, which made the traditional Sahrawi nomadic territory become smaller. Furthermore, due to the war against Morocco, many people were forced to settle in the Sahrawi refugee camps of Tindouf, which implied the development of a sedentary way of life. Since the ceasefire of 1991, camel husbandry has been recovering, but it had to adapt to the new circumstances, one of the most important is the change from a tribal structure of society to a state (the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic) managed through a nationalistic strategy lead by the POLISARIO. Finally, the destruction of landscape and the construction of militarized borderscapes also alter the ecosocial environment. Ismael Abu-Saad in "Spatial Transformation and Indigenous Resistance: The Urbanization of Palestinian Bedouin in Southern Israel" (2008) analyzes the strategy developed by the Israeli authorities in order to make Bedouin communities become sedentary and settle in urban areas specially designed for them. Abu-Saad characterizes this process of forced urbanization as one more colonial tool for the occupation of Palestine and argues that the refusal of many nomadic communities to live in these programmed cities has become a way of resistance.

➔ SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BORDERS

The main difference between the Israeli wall and the Moroccan wall is related to their emplacement. The Israeli wall is placed inside a populated area, whereas the Moroccan wall is placed far away from any populated area. One can describe the Israeli wall as an urban structure and the Moroccan wall as an isolated structure. The consequence of this difference is that the Israeli wall is *more* present as a physical structure in the daily life of Palestinians than the Moroccan wall in the life of Sahrawis. The Moroccan wall is but an image, a memory that can be sometimes visited. This does not mean that the Moroccan wall is less violent, but that this violence is performed in a different way. The violence of the Israeli wall is a type of violence that happens in-between, whereas the violence of the Moroccan wall is a type of violence that happens from distance.

This difference also implies a series of structural characteristics: the Israeli wall is related to a more baroque design, it requires more components to take part of its structure because of its proximity to the bodies against which it has been built. This proximity implies that the Israeli wall has to face more interventions on its surface and it has to adapt to a continuous contact with the skin of bodies, a continuous touch with flesh.

On the other hand, the Moroccan wall, the violence of which is performed from distance, requires less components (although it does not mean that the wall becomes more *simple*), but more big and long-range tools (heavy artillery). The Moroccan wall is a complex structure that takes advantage from its emplacement in the desert, as it has been already explained. It does not need to adapt to an urban landscape, but to a large territory. This is why it has not developed as a labyrinth (as in the Israeli case), but as an horizontal strip. The Israeli wall can be described as a wall that happens inside and the Moroccan wall as a wall that happens outside, although this categorization is but a crude metaphor.

The differences in the structure and the landscape of these two borderlands also determine the type of artistic strategies for re-appropriation that are developed in each context as it will be describe in chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 3: BORDERS BEYOND ARCHITECTURE. THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF BORDERED-SUBJECTIVITIES (BORDERITIES) AND LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES

“Las palabras no designan, sino encubren”

Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui¹

In this third chapter, many objects will be described and analyzed with the aim of providing an approach to the social and political atmosphere concerning borders. The goal is to understand the subjectivities and the ontology of the border that is being created through the discourses that are being delivered and the ideas that are being shared. The situation in the borderlands of Palestine and Western Sahara is intimately linked to what happens in the international field. This is why it is necessary to understand what kind of *beings* are being created by politicians, journalists, activists, migrants and refugees through their speeches, experiences and practices.

The *discourse* has been the chosen object to be analyzed in this chapter since words are one of the main devices through which we produce the world, or, as Margot Pujal Llombart argues in “Mujer, relaciones de género y discurso” (1993): “Se asume, pues, que hablar es hacer algo, que las prácticas discursivas son genuinamente prácticas sociales, con unos efectos concretos. Y que el lenguaje no es una puerta abierta hacia una realidad exterior, sino una forma de con-formarla.” (Pujal Llombart 1993, 204). However, I am also aware that the linguistic sphere is not the predominant productive force that produces subjectivity and it is not the sphere that explains all the other spheres –including *space*–. It not possible to understand the border only by looking at discourses. Or, as Lefebvre puts it:

Non-verbal sets are thus characterized by a spatiality which is in fact irreducible to the mental realm. There is even a sense in which landscapes, both rural and urban, fall under this head. To underestimate, ignore and diminish space amounts to the overestimation of texts, written matter, and writing systems, along with the readable and the visible, to the point of assigning to these a monopoly on intelligibility (Lefebvre 1991, 62).

Four speeches delivered by US leaders, four speeches delivered by EU leaders, a speech delivered by Benjamin Netanyahu (Prime Minister of Israel), a speech delivered by Mahmoud Abbas (President of the state of Palestine), a speech delivered by Mohammed VI (King of Morocco) and a speech delivered by Brahim Ghali (President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic) will be here addressed. The imbalance between the amount of speeches related to each territory is

¹ Cusicanqui, Silvia. 2010. *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa. Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores*. Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón.

intentional and it is an attempt to translate the imbalance of relevance or attention given in the Global North in mainstream contexts to these different actors in relation to the topic (namely, *the border*). I am aware that Israel and Morocco are given more attention than Palestine and Western Sahara in general, but not with regard to the question of the production of borders. I have also conducted seven interviews to seven people, each one coming from Palestine, Israel, Morocco, México, the US and the EU (actually, there are two people living in the EU that have been interviewed: one EU citizen born in Europe and a Chinese immigrant living in Madrid) respectively. People participating in the interviews have been chosen randomly. The objective is not to make statistics, but to compare particular discourses of randomly selected people with official/institutional speeches (those coming from politicians and the media) and look at the way certain ideas, images or arguments about borders are –or are not– (re)produced. The contexts from where both the speeches and the interviews come from have been chosen because they are the ones that have been analyzed in the previous chapter.

I have also analyzed the news on borders of three newspapers during a period of one week to provide an image of how information about frontier environments or borderlands is developed and distributed by the media. I have chosen three Spanish newspapers because one of them (*eldiario.es*) has a specific section dedicated to borders (called “Desalambre”). Thus, I thought it was interesting to start by looking at this specific newspaper and compare it to other two newspapers that are published in the same context: Spain.

Finally, I will address the analysis of the counter-discourses created by the Occupy movements regarding their relationship with the production of space. The hegemonic position from which borders are described and produced both symbolically and physically, represented by the US, the EU (or any state) and its governmental, bureaucratic and institutional settings, is not the only place from which space is conceptualized and appropriated. The Occupy movements, which are not homogeneous, appeared first as a practice developed in the different Arab countries (during the so-called Arab Spring), the 15M and the *indignados* movement in Spain, or the Occupy Wall Street movement (among others). The *square* was in those cases the place where occupation and re-appropriation took place. However, despite the fact that these movements did not focus on the border as the spatial structure to be occupied and taken from the hegemonic powers, they provided an opportunity to reflect on the ability of *people* to re-build spaces and, as Luisa Martín Rojo argues in her article “Occupy: La dinámica espacial del discurso en los movimientos globales de protesta” (2016), they also developed new linguistic strategies to name places and also to talk about space. The spatial dimension of the Occupy movements' discourses is the reason why it is interesting to talk about them in this chapter.

The arena from where the border is produced is the result of the dialectic relationships and

tensions between different positions both hegemonic and non-hegemonic. The border is, then, described, conceptualized and produced from the institutions, from the market, but also from the demonstrations that take place in the streets. However, due to the different position from which each speech is delivered, there is an imbalance of power that causes a difference on the impact that each discourse about space has on the process of developing subjectivities.

The subjectivities that arise from the discourses that address the border as their main *object* are called in this PhD Thesis *borderities*. The borderity defines (and is also defined by) the relation of the subject with the border. The subjectivities of those who have achieved to cross a border *illegally* and are conceptualized as *illegal immigrants* in politicians' official speeches, for example, are not the same as the subjectivities of those *legal citizens* that are forced to feel in danger because of the incoming of *illegal immigrants* by the same politicians. The differences between these two types of subjectivities (that have been oversimplified just to make the argument clear) depend on the relationship of the subject with the border: how the body experiences the architecture and the structure of the border, the experience of being border-labeled and border-conceptualized, etc. However, as it has been argued before, there are also counter-discourses that, at the same time of producing new relationships with space, also produce alternative subjectivities (or, borderities) that problematize the question of the body and the subject in/through the border.

1. POLITICIANS ON BORDERS

The first speech that will be analyzed is Donald Trump's presidential announcement speech in which Trump notified the world that he would be running for president of the United States of America. The speech was delivered on June 16th, 2015 at the Trump Tower, in New York City. It is not the main objective of this chapter to deeply discuss the symbolic circumstances that surround each discourse that will be analyzed. However, it is interesting to point out that the space occupied by each orator, as well as many other rhetorical and contextual details, are also relevant to understand the content and meaning of the speeches. In this case, Trump decided to deliver his words from the Trump Tower, a building that represents Trump's identity as a businessman (instead of as a politician) and that places him in his own territory. As we can see below, this idea of despising politicians is also present in his speeches.

The second discourse here analyzed is one of Donald Trump's campaign speeches. More specifically, the one he gave in West Bend, Wisconsin, on August 16th, 2016. In order to understand this discourse it is important to know the local social context in Wisconsin. In his speech, Trump constantly refers to the city of Milwaukee, where several protests took place during the previous

week and during the summer of 2016. He also refers to the African-American community, the one involved in the riots of 2016 in which a black male, called Sylville Smith, was shot and killed by the police. Following the analysis developed by several newspapers, Wisconsin is one of the states with more race inequality in terms of unemployment, incarceration and income rates. The incidents of Milwaukee caused a movement against the police, that was accused of racism and xenophobia. The origin of this movement is related to other cases of police violence against black citizens, which was also one of the triggers for the development of the Black Lives Matter movement. In his speech, Trump tries to underline the importance of the police to guarantee the safety of the African-American community.

The third speech is the one delivered by president Trump on January 25th, 2017, five days after he officially became the President of the United States, at the Department of Homeland Security, in Washington DC. Finally, the fourth discourse is a speech given by Secretary Kelly at the George Washington University Center for Cyber and Homeland Security on April 18th, 2017.

On the other hand, the four discourses chosen to represent the European point of view regarding borders are: Spanish President Mariano Rajoy's speech at the III Southern EU Countries Summit, on April 10th, 2017, which brought leaders from Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Cyprus together to discuss different issues regarding the EU; French Minister of the Interior Gérard Collomb's remarks to the press following the Justice and Home Affairs Council on September 18th, 2017, in which he talks about the EU, the fight against terrorism, migration and the Schengen agreements; Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel's discourse at the 53rd Munich Security Conference on February 18th, 2017; and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Theresa May's speech to the UN General Assembly on September 20th, 2017.

Finally, I will analyze Benjamin Netanyahu's –Prime Minister of Israel– 2018 UN General Assembly speech, Mahmoud Abbas' –President of Palestine– 2018 UN General Assembly speech, King Mohammed VI of Morocco's speech on the 43rd anniversary of the Green March and Brahim Ghali's –President of the RASD– 2018 speech in Mexico.

Before analyzing each discourse, a relatogram of the main concepts and ideas developed by each orator is provided. The structure of the relatograms consists of a drawing of each speaker with a comic balloon, and there are different signifiers that work in different ways:

- Red dots represent the core ideas regarding (or related to) borders (directly or indirectly, as it will be shown) that are developed in each speech.
- Short explanations of each core idea is also provided below red dots.
- Quotations of certain passages of the speeches are provided to illustrate and support the structure of the relatogram. These quotes are placed outside the balloons in order to produce

an estrangement effect: the analysis of the discourse (the interpretation) is placed inside the balloons, and the content of the discourses (the phenomenon) is placed outside them.

- Purple lines connect red dots in different ways to show the relationship between core ideas. These lines are not straight. They come and go and draw irregular trajectories to represent the fact that relationships are not always clear and beautifully clean.
- The source from which the speeches' audio and visual recordings and transcripts have been taken is provided in footnotes.

Before moving to the analysis of the different speeches a few words about relatograms have to be developed. Relatograms are conceptual and narrative tools that allow to express ideas through language and images. The fact that I have used relatograms as a tool to provide information and an analysis of each speech may seem simple and naive. However, there is a main reason that explains this choice. As already mentioned in the introduction to this PhD Thesis, artistic methodologies are being developed for this research and for the writing process of these pages with the aim of both putting art into practice to produce knowledge and also using art strategies to express that knowledge. Relatograms are very easy, accessible and joyful tools that provide an opportunity to manually shape the different elements of the composition. A relatogram is a tool that is very close to the handmade techniques and the DIY (Do It Yourself) philosophy of the fanzines, as Andrea Galaxina maintains in her book *¡Puedo hacer lo que quiera! ¡Puedo decir lo que quiera!* (2017). Relatograms provide an opportunity to develop a closer relationship to the materiality of the PhD Thesis: I draw the lines of the relatograms, I choose the colors of the symbols, I provide them with meaning, I shape the structure of the drawing... I do not want to impress the reader with my masterful skills in drawing, but to let them notice that knowledge can be produced and expressed with what they/we already have at home: pencils, pens, markers... It is an amateur way to express knowledge that is produced professionally. The practice and process of being drawing is also a way to focus on the analysis of the objects that are being analyzed just in the same way that the practice and process of being writing provides an opportunity to think *while* writing. Ideas do not always come first and they are expressed by writing them on a paper afterwards. Ideas also come into existence while writing and drawing. And that is the main reason why relatograms have been used.

The physical shape and structure of a PhD Thesis, as well as its materiality, is not independent of its content, which means that *what* I am saying is interrelated with *how* I am saying it and how information is placed in the space of the white pages. This way, I do not want to hide the fact that, as María Ángeles Alcántara Sánchez argues when talking about her PhD Thesis “Una Archiva del DIY (Do It Yourself): autoedición y autogestión en una fanzinoteca feminista-queer” (2016): “pretendo que mi tesis sea un acto político hecho desde la academia”².

2 Online at: <http://barcelones.com/cultura/gelen-jeleton-musica-dibujo-y-feminismo/2015/02/>, accessed October 8th,

Finally, I have also decided to draw relatograms because I wanted to do non-graphocentric and logocentric research, meaning I wanted to do research beyond writing and speech, based on other ways of expressing knowledge, such as drawing. As Carla Boserman explains it in her Trabajo Fin de Máster (TFM) “Relatogramas: Dibujo y cognición en laboratorios sin muros” (2013): “Quisiera esta ser una invitación a ampliar la mirada más allá de la palabra escrita, entendiendo que una mirada es política y está cargada de saberes diversos: lingüísticos, estéticos, prácticos, científicos... Tratar de sobrevolar la crítica logocéntrica para pensar en un escenario donde la palabra y la imagen aprenden a bailar sobre el papel y son capaces de configurar pedazos de realidad” (Boserman 2013, 3).

The relatograms have been designed in such a way that, in some cases, it does not matter where the reader starts looking at them. Some of the maps have no beginning (n)or end due to the manner that the core ideas are interrelated. Thus, sometimes readers can freely choose the concept from where to start their personal route through the cartographic representation of the speeches, just in the same way that one can choose the place from which to start looking at a map that represents a portion of space. Other times, the lines that link different concepts (represented as arrows) will guide the reader's sight to perform the path in a certain way. This implies that the different speeches here addressed are differently structured and that the structure of speeches is sometimes rhizomatic and non-hierarchical. Some of the discourses represent the complex matrix of reality even if it was not the intention of the orator to do it.

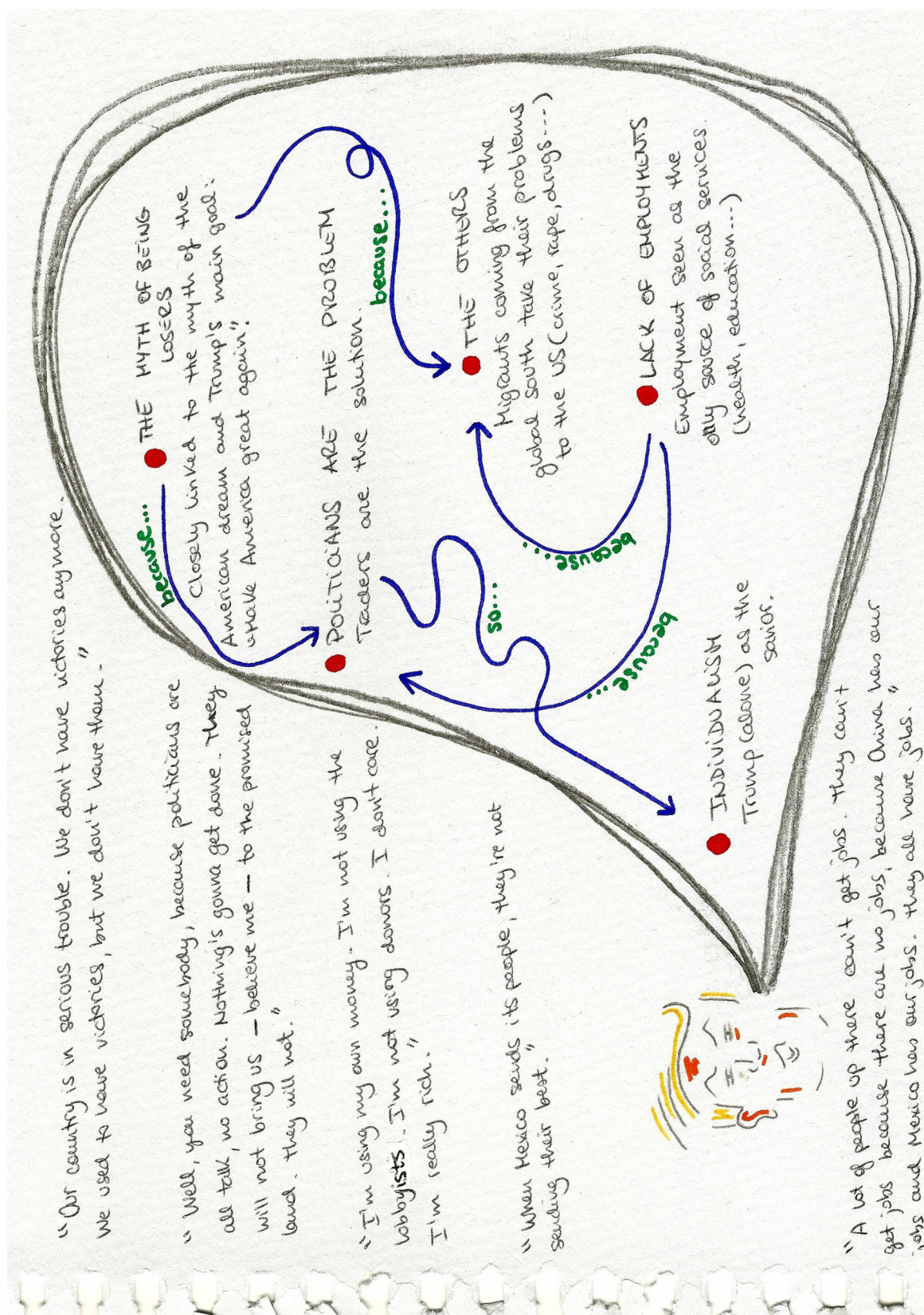
Finally, and before delving into the analysis of the speeches, I would warn the reader that the relatograms are placed horizontally, so it is necessary to rotate this PhD Thesis to read them properly. This is not an edition mistake. When I designed the shape of this text, I also thought about the PhD Thesis as an object that would be printed and bound, and I wanted it to become a device that readers would need to manipulate. Again, this idea came after a reflection on *how* to organize the information on the pages. Talking about space and doing a PhD Thesis based on artistic methodologies required this reflection to materialize *in* the object.

I also decided to place the relatograms horizontally so that they would be readable, so that they could occupy all the space of the page and the reader could spend some time just wandering around their words, their symbols and their drawings.

The relatograms and the texts for the analysis of each speech that is provided below are complementary. This means that I do not try to explain in the texts what I have represented in the relatograms, because I do not want to do the reader's job. I use two different ways to analyze the discourses: relatograms and texts. My objective is that none of them is taken as a the main one, as the principal tool for analysis. Understanding the analysis of each speech is the result of having

seen/read both the relatogram and the text. Thus, this is also an attempt to reflect on the way we usually understand the different elements within a *book*. We are used to looking at the text as the privileged way to express knowledge, and all the other components or elements are there to surround it, to work as examples or to graphically represent what has already been said or is going to be said. The word is full of power. This PhD Thesis does not solve this tension, since the text is still the main way to provide information. However, I try to *play* with other different objects so that this PhD Thesis becomes not only a research but also a gesture that twists the reading process.

DONALD TRUMP'S PRESIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENT SPEECH³

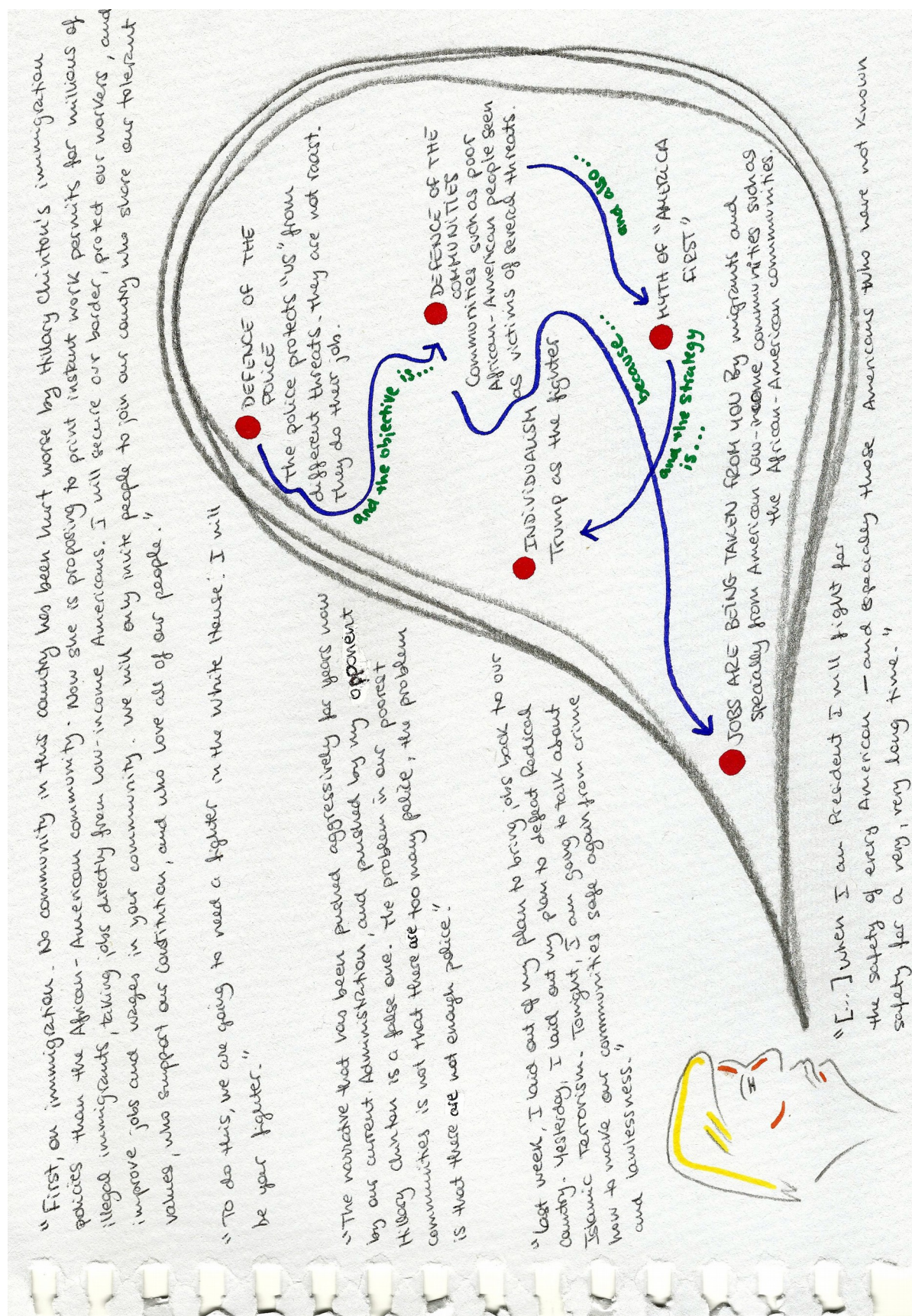


³ Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apjNfkysjbM>; transcript: <http://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/>, accessed October 8th, 2018.

In this case, and even though the topic of *the border* is not clearly developed, there are many indirect references to it. In other words, Trump does not need to specifically mention the border to make it be present. The (not yet) President Trump constantly refers to migrants coming from the Global South, specially Mexicans, as one of the core and current national problems of the United States of America. Politicians have not been able to manage the situation so, another kind of leaders are needed to provide new ways of doing: businessmen are, following Trump's point of view, the future. And the best possible businessman to accomplish a leader's tasks is himself. The development of the myth of the rich businessman that is independent of everything and can do whatever he wants because he has enough money to do it contributes to strengthening the idea that he actually will do what he promises. For instance, reinforcing the wall between Mexico and the United States (a wall that in fact did exist previously to his intention to build it).

This omnipotence that is characteristic of the mainstream image of the businessman that Trump reproduces and embodies also places his speech in a very specific ideological position concerning the relation to the state. Trump embodies a neoliberal and capitalistic perspective regarding politics, economy and social welfare. But, at the same time, he articulates his speeches in such a way that he develops a strong national identity based on avoiding any external (cultural, political, economic) interference, which does not always fit the neoliberal mythology of the free market. The businessman-president appears as the only possible character that will make it possible for the American society both to be capitalist/neoliberal (by supporting the economic *laissez-faire*) and statist (by controlling the way that companies do their job). The businessman-president will make the state itself work as an efficient and productive company.

From this bipolar perspective, the necessity of getting migrants out of the US is supported with two main arguments in this speech, which are also present in many other speeches delivered by Trump during his following campaign. The first one is that migrants that cross the border illegally are not good for the nation because they take their problems –such as crime, drugs and rape– with them and, consequently, the nation becomes somehow impure. The second one is that they take the jobs that were supposed to belong to Americans, and this makes it impossible for unemployment rates to decrease. So, this way, Trump develops a very specific ontology of the border: crossing the border implies a *bad* thing, so, the simple act of crossing the border, which is already seen as a crime, makes the person who crosses it become essentially *bad*, or evil. I use these too simple terms (“good” and “bad”, as well as “evil”) intentionally since they are the terms mostly used by Donald Trump. The border, then, becomes a space that transforms people, that demonizes them. One becomes *the other* in view of Trump's Administration. One becomes a *bad* body, one embodies a *bad* subjectivity, one becomes the opposite of being the good white citizen of the United States of America, a citizen whose identity is based on his/her will to follow the rules.



⁴ Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qYf7uRGruY>, accessed October 8, 2018; transcript: <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/08/full-text-donald-trumps-speech-on-227095>, accessed October 8th, 2018.

In this second case, the situation and the way in which Trump articulates the ontology of the border is different. He faces a conceptual and ideological problem when delivering this speech. The problem is that he has to defend the African-American community, which has historically been *othered*, meaning that it has been seen and treated as *the other*; and, at the same time, he has to convince the audience that the real *other* is not the African-American community, but those who cross the border illegally: Mexicans and Latin Americans, mostly. The main goal is to make African-Americans trust him, specially after the riots of Milwaukee. It is interesting to focus on how one of the arguments that Trump normally uses to support the necessity of getting *the others* out is in this case slightly modified to solve the conceptual and ideological problem to which I had previously referred. This argument is the one concerning jobs. Habitually, Trump develops this argument in a very simple way, such as “Mexicans are taking jobs from you, Americans” (this is not a true quotation, but a simulation). But, in this case, the argument is more sophisticated: Mexicans are not taking jobs from Americans (in general), they are taking jobs from low-income Americans, which directly affects the African-American community, specially in Wisconsin where there is a huge unemployment rates and inequality based on race.

The question of *the other*, then, becomes complex. But, again, what makes the difference is the act of crossing the border. The border becomes an embodied structure that is inseparable from the flesh itself and that inevitably identifies *the other*. Bodies that cross borders illegally are ontologically objectified and stigmatized, and therefore, dismissed. They could never belong to this part of the border because they have inhabited the border itself. The two situations of having crossed the border illegally and living in the *right* side of the border seem incompatible. They cannot happen at the same time. They cannot be embodied by the same subject.

In fact, the very existence of the bordered and othered bodies of those who cross the line and reach the goal of living in the *right* side, meaning the United States of America, implies an enlargement of the border. These bodies carry the border with them as a stigma. The presence of the bordered-othered bodies in the United States of America implies the presence of the border in any part of the national territory. However, the invisibilization of these bodies, as a result of both a strategy developed by immigrants in order not to be deported and a strategy developed by hegemonic powers in order not to provide *the others* with existence (voice, rights...), makes the border become intermittent. It sporadically appears as a tangible reality for existing Americans (*legal* citizens), whereas it is always *there* for *illegal* immigrants.

From the previous argument, it can be conclude that bodies that cross borders suffer two types of processes that pierce their flesh: a process of *otherization* and a process of *borderization*, which means a body does not only become *the other*, but also *the undefined* (that is placed in a in-between position: the inhabitant of the borderlands, the ambiguous body).

"From here on out I'm asking all of you to enforce the laws of the United States of America. They will be enforced and enforced strongly because people are surprised to hear that we do not need new laws. We will work within the existing system and framework. We are going to restore all the rule of law in the United States."

"A nation without borders is not a nation."

"We're in the middle of a crisis in our southern border. The unprecedented surge of illegal migrants from Central America is harming both Mexico and the United States and I believe the steps we will take starting right now will improve the safety in both of our countries. It's going to be very, very good for Mexico."

"I want to emphasize that we will be working in partnership with our friends in Mexico to improve safety and economic opportunity on both sides of the border."

"As I've said repeatedly to the country, we are going to get the bad ones out, the criminals and the drug dealers and gangs and gang members and cartel leaders. The day is over when they can stay in our country and wreak havoc. We are going to get them out just to get them out just and John Kelly is going to lead that."

ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAWS
Because the American system is already a good one.

and the strategy is...

CRISIS IN THE SOUTHERN BORDER
Which will be solved by a reinforcement of the border (physically). This is seen as the best solution for both Americans and Mexicans and would require mutual collaboration.

because there is...

ENFORCEMENT OF THE STRATEGY IS...
Optimum To remember who "we" are, what "our" essence is.

GET THE OTHERS OUT
Because open borders have caused too much damage to American families."

the strategy is...

⁵ Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMgTjq0SYxs>, accessed October 8, 2018; transcript: <https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-speech-washington-dc-january-25-2017>, accessed October 8th, 2018.

Reinforcing the ontology of the border necessarily implies the necessity of reinforcing the ontology of the self, simply because there can be no *other* without the *self* (the real *being*). There is no *they* without *we* –this is the logic that a binomial way of thinking supports⁶–. That is exactly what happens in this third discourse by Donald Trump. In this case, again, he argues that the others cannot remain in the United States and he says he would get them out simply by enforcing the laws that already exist. So, the problem was not that there were not enough laws or that they were not good enough. The problem was that politicians have not had the will to enforce them properly. Enforcing the laws properly is part of the strategy to reinforce the self. Other necessary step to achieve this ontological reinforcement is to make borders work. Borders are devices to define the self, the nation, as it is argued by Trump –“A nation without borders is not a nation” (Trump 2016)–, but they are also devices to define the other. This way, the ontology of the border becomes the dark side of a moon that only shows its most bright face: the nation, which is the self.

The bordered other and the self can then be used as two main categories to analyze what happens at the borderlands, as Gloria E. Anzaldúa would call it, that spread between Mexico and the United States of America. These two categories identify the two main *creatures* that inhabit the world when looking at their relationship with walls, fences or any other architectural structure that is used to materialize the border.

The fact that bordered-bodies and self-bodies can be understood as creatures of a certain world (that can be called *borderlands*) is also related with the process of naturalization of otherness and *selfness*. The border becomes an ecosystem *naturally* characterized by the existence of a certain *natural* fauna inside it. This fauna consists of others and selves and the relationship between these creatures is the consequence of the *natural* development of the ecosystem in itself.

Making the other and the self become ontological categories is the result of a social, historical and political process that nevertheless has been conceptualized as a natural process. This way, the *other* is a word that describes a reality that is seen as a natural one that can be studied by applying scientific methodologies. Naturalizing social processes always implies a risk of essentialization.

6 Brigitte Vasallo (2018) has also reflected on the development of the binomial logic in order to understand the international context based on what she calls the *monogamous thinking*. Although this perspective is not further developed in this PhD Thesis, it could also be applicable in order to study the way borders are conceptualized as devices that support a monogamous way of looking at the world, where conflicts are always seen as the fight between *us* and *them*.

SECRETARY KELLY'S SPEECH AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON CENTER FOR CYBER AND HOMELAND SECURITY⁷

While you're having your morning coffee, the Coast Guard is pulling a fisherman aboard after his boat capsized in stormy seas.

While you're deciding what you want for lunch, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center is teaching law enforcement officers how to respond to an active shooter [---]

TOO MANY THREATS
Such as criminals, voters, radicals, terrorists...
who can even come from "inside" and be difficult to recognize and predict because "they" resemble "us".

SECURITY FORCES AS HEROES
They work each day to guarantee "our" freedom.

because they provide...

SOLUTIONS
Such as enforcing the laws,
securing borders and
developing alliances.

because there are...


"We are under attack from criminals who think their greed justifies raping young girls at knife point, dealing poison to our youth, or killing just for fun."

We are under attack from people who hate us, hate our freedoms, hate our laws, hate our values, hate the way we simply live our lives [---]."

"In the past 12 months alone, there have been 35 homegrown terrorist cases in 18 states. These are the cases we know about — homegrown terrorism is notoriously difficult to predict and control."

We will never apologize for carrying out our mission.

We will never apologize for making our country more secure."



⁷ Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFPLpnEm_14, accessed October 8th, 2018; transcript: <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2017/04/18/home-and-away-dhs-and-threats-america>, accessed October 8th, 2018.

The speech of Secretary Kelly, which was delivered once Trump's Administration had already been established and had had a short trajectory, is a speech that works as a piece of propaganda to support the new policies and ways of doing, which, indeed, are not so new. Kelly's speech mainly consists of a long list of the threats that the United States of America have to face every single day as well as a list of the solutions that the Department of Homeland Security is implementing. Since some of these solutions may collide with the routines and daily lives of the citizens, another main part of Kelly's discourse consist of acclaiming the work of all the people whose jobs guarantee US security and presenting the possible collateral damages as necessary minor discomforts. Again, the *other* is related to all the problems and threats that put the United States under danger, which justifies the securing measures that will be developed in the southern border.

Another argument used by Kelly to reinforce borders, a reason that is also present in some of Trump's speeches analyzed above, is that a wall will also provide more security to Mexico. The argument is based on the idea that a strong border, a bigger and more sophisticated wall, will discourage migrants from crossing the line and, therefore, it will imply that less people die while doing it. Furthermore, as Trump has sometimes argued, it will also demotivate other Latin American migrants from coming to Mexico since they will understand that the border is impenetrable. This is the way the wall is described as the best solution for both Mexico and the US. The migrant caravan that traveled from different countries of Central America to the US border during the last four-month period of 2018 questions Trump's arguments, though. Also, this migrant caravan caused that other components of the border became visible: civilian patrols or militia were organized to *protect* the US border, to *protect the nation*.

These two last speeches differ from the previous ones in the mood of the orators. Mexico does not appear as the unequivocally enemy, but as a necessary collaborator for the development of US migration (and *othering* and ontological) policies.

Finally, it has to be mentioned that the speeches delivered by members of Trump's Administration always focus on the southern border as if the northern one between the United States of America and Canada does not exist. Of course, this is a colonial rhetorical strategy: to make the border in the south become intrinsically problematic, whereas the northern one is almost nonexistent. This way, Trump's argument "a nation without borders is not a nation" becomes inconsistent. What he really means is that a *nation without walls between us and them (the others)* is not a nation.

"Reafirmamos, en línea con las declaraciones de Atenas y de Lisboa, la importancia de repartir la cooperación en el Mediterráneo y con los países africanos. Insistimos en que la migración exige un planteamiento global, que comprenda: repartir el diálogo y la cooperación con los países de origen, tránsito y destino de las migraciones, en especial los mediterráneos y africanos [...]"

"Queremos que la UE se convierta en un auténtico proveedor de seguridad y defensa, una fuerza creíble frente a los amenazas a nuestra seguridad".

"Estamos de acuerdo en la necesidad de promover el crecimiento sostenible y el empleo y contener y extender nuestros modelos sociales de estado de bienestar. La convergencia económica entre los Estados miembros merece un nuevo impulso. Es una prioridad en nuestra acción la lucha contra el desempleo, en particular el de larga duración y el juvenil. El Mercado Interior y el euro son poderosos instrumentos para el crecimiento económico y el progreso social [...]"

"En este momento, la ruta del Mediterráneo central se encuentra bajo una presión migratoria extrema [...], o-
tras rutas migratorias, como la que recorren el Mediterráneo oriental y occidental también requieren nuestra completa atención."

⁸ Transcript: <http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/presidente/actividades/Documents/2017/Declaraci%C3%B3n%20de%20Madrid%20ES.pdf>, accessed October 8th, 2018.

Rajoy's speech at the III Southern EU Countries Summit is also based on two traditional arguments that are used as the main rhetorical weapons for the fight against the other: the necessity of unity to provide security, which is also defended due to the political EU crisis caused by the Brexit, and the necessity to efficiently manage the arrival of migrants. Contrary to what happens in Trump's and Kelly's discourses, looking at Rajoy's speech, there is no other reason besides terrorism to argue for the *evil* of migrants. Nor Rajoy neither any other EU leaders in general argues that migrants are going to take Europeans jobs, although it is actually a very popular argument spread in the streets, at least in Spain (and here I am talking from my own experience. This is not an statement based on studies, it is mainly an experiential observation). The absence of any other argument besides the fear of terrorism is also due to the sensitivity that the refugees crisis has produced, which has also caused a reinforcement of the categorical distinction between economic migrants and refugees or asylum-seekers. This intentional distinction implies, as in the case of Trump when referring to illegal migrants while talking in front of the African-American communities of Milwaukee, an ideological problem that is not being solved since it seems to be a useful rhetorical tool to manipulate people's understanding of the migratory question.

However, the fact that there is not a clear reason to explain why migrants are *bad* for Europe in Rajoy's speech can also mean it is implied that they are intrinsically and inherently *bad*, which again links the ontology of the border to one of its main features: being *bad* is the consequence of crossing borders illegally. The act of being crossing the border in itself implies a stigma that becomes an embodied category. The act of crossing a border, then, becomes a biopolitical process that marks the skin of the bodies that cross it. This act of crossing the border, however, does not always happen *in* the border actually: EU policies also focus on *preventing* illegal immigration, which means a body is sometimes stigmatized long before arriving to a fence. The other becomes the other as a result of a process of forecasting.

Rajoy does not develop the question of refugees, and he does not address the differences between illegal immigrants and refugees, but it is present in the following discourses delivered by different EU leaders and, therefore, it will be further developed in the following pages.

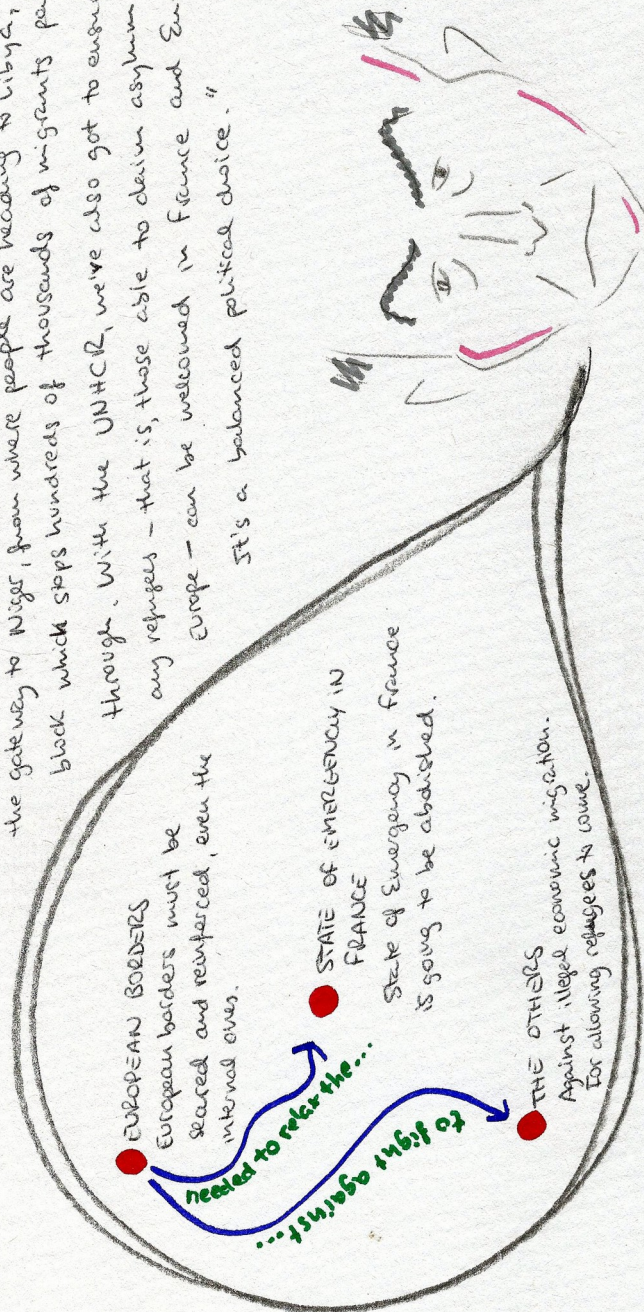
GÉRARD COLLOMB'S REMARKS⁹

"Tomas de Mattièrre, European Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos confirmed that the European Commission would indeed like to take an initiative to relax the Schengen [borders] code, obviously without undermining free movement but allowing us to carry out checks at national borders where there's a risk of terrorism."

"As you probably know, we're pushing through legislation today in France on security and the fight against terrorism because we're going to end the state of emergency."

"My Italian colleague and I talked about how to deal with this problem together. President Macron is saying that we must take in a certain number of refugees. The idea is both to halt the flow of economic migrants from Libya's coast and prevent the building on Libya's shoreline of camps, where living conditions are pretty much the worst you can experience, and allow people to return to their country, and at the same time set up in Agadez i.e. the gateway to Niger, from where people are heading to Libya, a sort of block which stops hundreds of thousands of migrants passing through. With the UNHCR, we've also got to ensure that any refugees - that is, those able to claim asylum in Europe - can be welcomed in France and Europe."

It's a balanced political choice."



⁹ Transcript: <http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/vues/Kiosque/FranceDiplomatie/kiosque.php?fichier=baen2017-09-18.html>, accessed October 8, 2018.

There are two main topics here that have to be analyzed. The first one is the idea of relaxing the Schengen Borders Code to guarantee security. This relaxation is necessary for France due to its intention to abolish the State of Emergency. European borders have to be secured to make it possible for France to relax its own security measures. So, if the EU implements this strategy, the abolition of the State of Emergency in France, that is presented as a good thing, would nevertheless be followed by a reinforcement of the borders in Europe, which means that nothing really changes, at least conceptually: borders remain the chosen device to protect Europe. It is also interesting to look at the way this situation is presented. Gérard Collomb literally says that the European Commission would like to “relax” the Schengen Borders Code. The word *relax* is not casual. Arguing for the relaxation of the Schengen Codes does not have the same effect as arguing for the reinforcement of borders and border controls and clearly explaining that European citizens will be checked. This is a clear example of how discourses and euphemisms are used to develop certain type of ontologies and subjectivities.

The second main topic is the one related to the difference between refugees and economic migrants. This difference allows for the development of an illusion: that there are *certain others* that deserve to be welcomed in Europe whereas *other others* do not. Both refugees and economic migrants face a reality where new border fences have been built and reinforced (between Slovenia and Croatia or between Hungary and Serbia, for example); new border controls have been established (most of both fences and controls are supposed to be temporary, just like the Israeli wall in Palestine); the asylum system and relocation scheme has not worked properly, as organizations such as Amnesty International or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees have reported¹⁰; deals have been made with countries such as Turkey with the objective of not allowing irregular migrants or asylum-seekers to settle in the EU and allowing only legal refugees to come (2016 EU-Turkey Statement); bureaucracy has played its role as an obstacle; etc. On the other hand, it has become obvious that the difference between economic migrants and refugees is problematic: the interrelationships between economic, social and political issues are complex and sometimes they remain in the shadow because of their complexity, but it does not mean that they do not exist. They are actually existent. Therefore, the act of distinguishing between economic migrants and refugees ends up seeming arbitrary and baseless, since there is no clear way to untangle the skein of the social-political-economic matrix of power. Thus, the reproduction of the idea that it is possible to accurately distinguish one from the other produces a performativity of arbitrariness: distinguishing between economic migrants and refugees is not an act of categorizing and naming. It is an act of managing without taking into account the interrelated nature of *things*.

¹⁰ Amnesty International and UNHCR statements: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/09/eu-countries-have-fulfilled-less-than-a-third-of-their-asylum-relocation-promises/>; <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/news/16558>, both accessed October 8th, 2018.

"There is a new balance of power. The structure has become far more multilateral, but we still have a super power — the United States of America — and we still have a transatlantic link. We have a united Europe with 28 members. We have seen the rise of emerging economies, particularly in Asia."

"We are facing asymmetrical threats, particularly that of Islamic terrorism, starting on 11 September 2001. There are new conflicts as a result of civil wars, population growth and climate change."

"I firmly believe that the challenges of today's world cannot be overcome by any one country alone. These challenges require joint efforts. This is why I believe we need multilateral international structures, which we must strengthen and make more efficient."

"The European Union thus needs to learn to concentrate more on the truly important challenges that is, on competitiveness, jobs, internal security and international security."

INTERNATIONAL POWER BALANCE
We have moved from the two blocks model to a multilateral model that implies interdependence.

implies new...

JOIN EFFORT
By improving multilateral and international structures (NATO, EU, G20 ...) and also by developing alliances (with mission countries).

INTERNATIONAL THREATS
Islamic terrorism, civil wars, popular growth, climate change...

EU PRIORITIES
competitiveness, jobs, internal security, international security.

to face and fight...

to work on...

¹¹ Transcript: https://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/Content/EN/Reden/2017/2017-02-18-bkin-rede-msk_en.html, accessed October 8th, 2018.

Angela Merkel's speech develops one main idea: multilateralism, which is closely linked to the idea of multiplicity. The international field is not characterized by a bipolar system anymore, but by a system that is made of multiple poles or blocks. Also, the threats that must be fought are multiple. The conclusion is that these multiple poles that shape the current international power balance must work together to solve all the different problems that are in play.

The proposal made by Merkel to reach this main goal is to improve multilateral organizations and institutions such as the NATO, the EU or the G20, which means alliances have to be made from the military, political, and economic field. This implies a difference with other discourses that have already been analyzed. Merkel expands the border to other fields. Protection and security are provided thanks to the interrelationship of many factors and, consequently, it is not only a question of building higher walls. The fortification of Europe is not only architectural, it is also institutional.

The speech delivered by Merkel makes the audience and the reader become aware of the many different circumstances, factors, devices and inter-dependencies that are part of the international politics.

However, even if the fortification that Merkel seems to suggest is not architectural but institutional, it still implies that there is a need of *fortification*, meaning a need of defending one's land, territory and nation by retreating into oneself. The fact that the institutional fortification *seems* to be a less violent strategy does not imply it *is* a less violent strategy. Institutions perform violence over bodies through the process of decisions making. These decisions become the basis for the development of certain policies that can again materialize in architectural measures, bureaucratic procedures or military missions. Thus, despite Merkel's attempt to focus on the necessity of an institutional coordination and institutional alliances, one should not forget that these processes that are disguised as democratic ones are being developed in a xenophobic context where the other is always being attacked.

THERESA MAY'S SPEECH AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY¹²

CHALLENGES
There are several challenges that test the European values and that take place beyond the European boundaries.

require...

SOLUTIONS
Working together to defend the European model, for example, by reforming international institutions such as the UN and developing strong nations.

"I believe that the only way for us to respond to this vast array of challenges is to come together and defend the international order that we have worked so hard to create and the values by which we stand."

AS we meet at this General Assembly we face challenges that go right to the heart of who we are as nations. Challenges that test our values, our vision and our resolve to defend the rules and standards that underpin the security and prosperity of our fellow citizens. As I argued in my speech here last year, many of these challenges do not recognise or respect geographical boundaries [...] I think of course of the terrorism [...] I think of the climate change [...] And I think of the vast challenges that come from the mass displacement of people, from refugees fleeing conflict and persecution. Others, economic migrants [...].

¹² Transcript: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/theresa-mays-speech-to-the-un-general-assembly-2017>, accessed October 8th, 2018.

The speech delivered by Theresa May is very similar to Angela Merkel's speech: it focuses on the several and different threats that have to be faced and argues that one of the best solutions to fight against these threats is to improve international (she does not call them *multilateral*, as Merkel does) institutions such as the UN. However, besides the general structure of the discourse, there is a detail that is important to analyze regarding the topic of borders. This detail is contained in one of the quotes that have been chosen to illustrate the relatogram that is placed above. May says that one of the disadvantages of current threats, which she calls *challenges*, is that they “do not recognise or respect geographical boundaries” (May 2017). This argument may sound a little bit naive but it is not, since it clearly points out the EU frustration to manage its boundaries, to manage its borders. *Things* happen without respecting national borders, without recognizing political lines that have been historically agreed on maps. And that is an example of what the meaning of real border crisis is.

Border crisis is not only a question of illegal migrants or refugees, it is, as it has already been argued, an ontological question. Borders create, define and describe the subject and they also determine the subjectivities that can be developed, how they can be developed and whose bodies can embody them. Thus, the border crisis is the crisis of the *being* and it is related to the inability of those who have the privilege of *being themselves* and take decisions (instead of *being the others* and suffer these decisions) to make architectural borders become the limits that clearly define the outline of the *being*.

Looking at the analyzed discourses –until now–, it may be conclude that the *bordered other* consists of:

- An intrinsically *evil* subject.
- An objectified body that comes from the Global South.
- Both a victim (of economic, political, social circumstances) and a criminal (since s/he tries to cross borders illegally).

And the *border* consists of:

- A device to *othering* subjects.
- A device to objectify the bodies of *the others*.
- A device to make *the others* become intrinsically *evil*.
- A stigma that remains in the body of *the others*, even after they have crossed the border.

"[...] It won't happen because what I am hides Israel will find."

"So I want to use this opportunity to express Israel's appreciation to President Trump and Ambassador Haley for the unwavering support they have provided Israel at the UN. They have unequivocally backed Israel's right to defend itself."

Every time I stand here, I feel as I do today - I am privileged to stand here as Prime Minister of the Jewish and democratic State of Israel."

"Yet here at the UN, Israel is absurdly accused of racism. [...] Yet here at the UN, Israel is shamefully accused of apartheid. [...] Yet here at the UN, Israel is outrageously accused of ethnic cleansing."

"None of the countries are denigrated or labeled for celebrating their unique national identity - Only Israel is labeled."

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graph LR
    US["THE US  
As the best ally."]
    UN["THE UN  
As an institution that  
criticizes Israel with no  
reasons."]
    DEM["DEMOCRACY  
Israel is a democratic State  
despite the  
accusations made by other  
countries."]
    SEC["SECURITY.  
Israel as the only actor that  
guarantees security in the  
region."]

    US -- "helps..." --> UN
    UN -- "denies Israel's..." --> DEM
    DEM -- "does not help to..." --> UN
    UN --> SEC
  
```

¹³ Transcript: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/full-text-benjamin-netanyahu-s-2018-un-general-assembly-speech-1.6513185>, accessed April 4th, 2019.

Netanyahu's speech first focuses on the role played by Israel in the field of security. Despite the silence –and even ignorance– of many countries in relation to Iran's nuclear menace. Netanyahu explains that Israel has always been aware of the real regional context. This allows the Prime Minister of Israel to strengthen the image of Israel as a necessary actor for providing security in the Middle East. However, the question of security does not only imply talking about the role of Israel in the regional and international sphere. Netanyahu also highlights the right of Israel to defend himself in front of other threats such as Hamas and Palestinian terrorism.

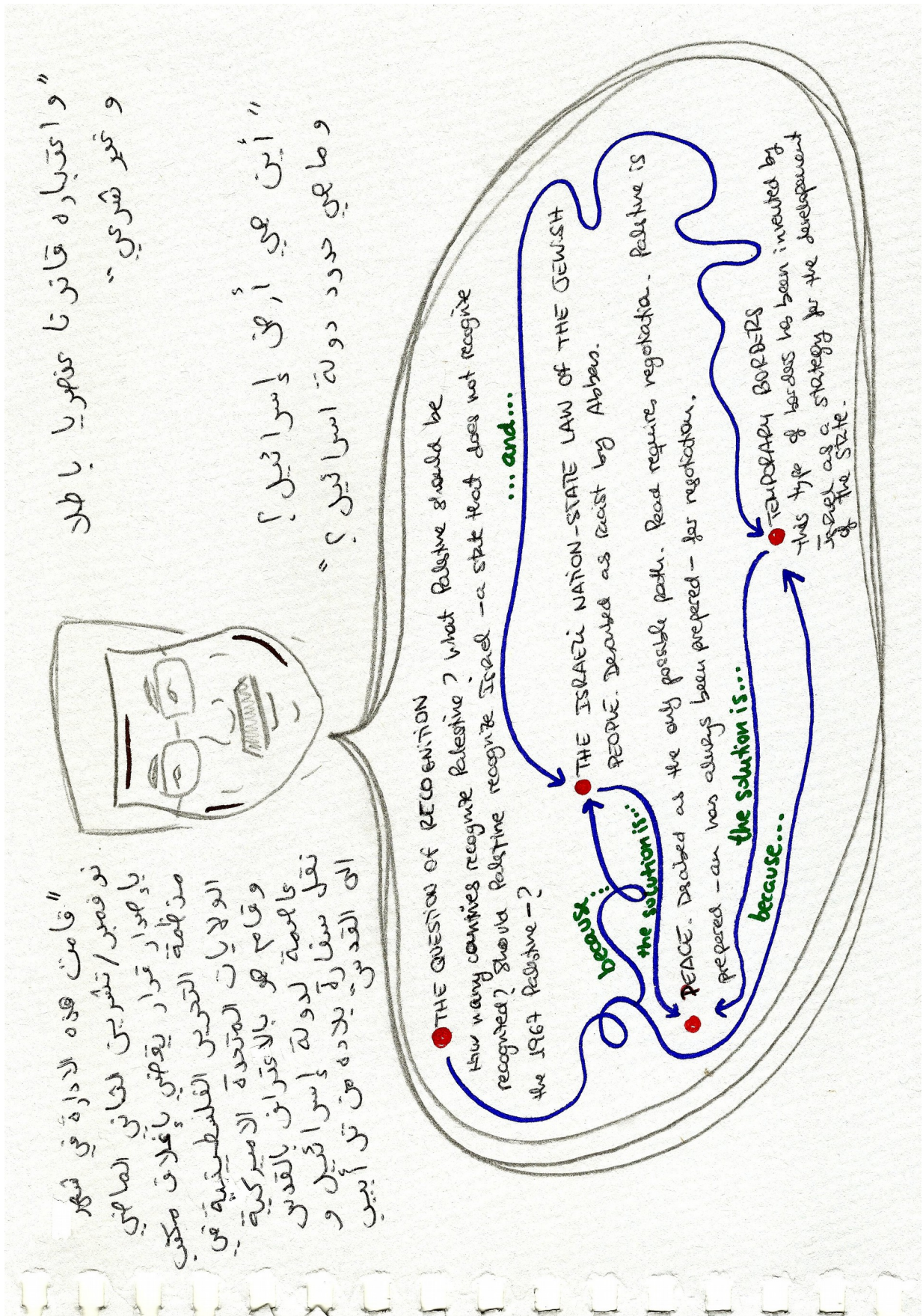
Netanyahu criticizes the UN as a deaf and blind institution that has not been sensible to the threats that have arose in the region and that has –instead– only focused on describing Israel as a racist and apartheid State. Netanyahu also stresses the importance of the US , President Trump and Ambassador Haly as the only true allies, the ones that have supported Israel's rights to defense and existence.

Netanyahu appears as a character that is fully aware of the way Israel is described by many actors. This is why he refers to racism, apartheid and ethnic cleansing, which are some of the processes historically related to the production of the State of Israel and its borderlands. He denies these processes and describes the Israeli State as a democracy, and he also expresses his disappointment with regard to the position of other countries that question the existence of Israel whereas they do not question the existence of any other State.

This way, Israel is presented as a victim and as a hero. Israel is a hero because it is the only State that guarantees real security in the region, despite the blindness and deafness of other countries. However, it is also a victim because the international community seems to obstruct its development as a State and as a nation by arguing that Israel is racist and implements an apartheid system.

It is interesting to analyze Netanyahu's speech in relation to Mahmoud Abbas' speech. Netanyahu emphasizes the right of Israel to exist and to defend itself. These are also the arguments historically developed by Palestinians in order to resist. Thus, the rhetoric strategy of Netanyahu is based on an appropriation of the Palestinian rhetoric strategies. Netanyahu denounces that Israel's existence and security are continuously in danger or, at least, they are constantly being questioned by the international community.

Netanyahu finishes his speech by expressing his pride of being the Prime Minister of the “Jewish and democratic State of Israel”, which allows him to define the solid identity of the nation and its symbolic limits –which are also necessary to design the territorial limits; namely, the border–.



14 Recorded: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sltw8cQIacw>, accessed April 4th, 2019.

Mahmoud Abbas' speech starts by talking about Jerusalem. Even before the greetings, he says that “Jerusalem is not for sale”. The beginning of his speech is, thus, very eloquent: there is no intention to be politically correct in front of the UN, but to condemn Israel and its politics. Abbas addresses the question of recognition and the problems it implies since it is not clear what should be recognized. Should Palestine be recognized? And, if so, what Palestine? The 1967 Palestine? He also asks a different question: due to the damage Israel continuously causes in Palestine, should not Israel be un-recognized by Palestine? Addressing the question of recognition is a strategy aimed to provoke a response in the international community, because the different members of the international community are the ones that can recognize the State of Palestine.

This ambiguity that is characteristic of the question of recognition (because it is very difficult to define what exactly should be recognized) is also based on what Abbas calls the temporary borders of Israel. Since Israel does not define its borders –spatially and temporally– in a clear way, it is not possible to claim for a State of Palestine. The borders produced by Israel are intentionally ambiguous. This ambiguity is indeed what makes it possible for Israel to develop the occupation and fulfill the colonial objective of creating the State of Israel. Thus, even though Israel is described by Netanyahu as a solid entity –as we have seen in the previous pages–, this solidity is paradoxically based on the existence of blurry territorial and temporal limits for the sake of the State. In order to become bigger in the future, Israel has to become ambiguous in the present.

Abbas also refers to some of the political measures developed by Israel, such as the Israeli Nation-State Law of the Jewish People and he describes them as being racist. This way, he also addresses the question of the Israeli apartheid system and the devices used by Israel in order to produce the border.

Besides criticizing the way of doing of Israel, Abbas also highlights the aim of Palestine to negotiate. He stresses that Palestine is and has always been ready for negotiation. Negotiation is necessary in order to provide peace and peace is the only possible path.

Therefore, Abbas' objective is to provide a wide picture that describes the way of doing of Israel and, at the same time, he underlines the necessity of delving into the process of negotiation so that peace is guaranteed. Thus, we can notice an important difference between Netanyahu's and Abbas' speeches: whereas Netanyahu mainly bases Israel's right to existence on a type of peace provided by security, Abbas principally bases Palestine's right to existence on a type of peace provided by negotiation.

“فهذه الواقع لا يتماشى مع الطموح الذي كان
يحفز جليل القدر والاعتدال الى تحقيق
الوحدة المعاصرة”

“ويشهد الله انني لم اريد، منذ
توليت العرش، يهودى و حسن نية،
يفتح الحدود بين يديين و
بتطبيع العلاقات المغربية
البربرية”

[---] وفي إطار مبادرة الحكم
الذاتي

“لنشكل الملاقاة المصيرية الضعفاء، التي تحتفل اليوم بذكرى
الثالثة والعشرين، مرحلة فاصلة في الدخول المتواهي، من
أجل استكمال الوحدة القارية للبلاد”

ALGERIA
Morocco is willing to strengthen the
relationships with Algeria.

MAHREB
It is necessary to achieve unity in the region
because there are a lot of similarities between
the different Maghrebi countries.

AFRICA
Morocco belongs to Africa.

is needed in...
TERRITORIAL UNITY
Morocco does not give up. Morocco must achieve unity - Western
Sahara should become an autonomous part
of Morocco.

15 Transcript: <http://www.maroc.ma/ar/الأميرة-الخطباء-ملكية>, accessed April 4th, 2019.

Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, sends what we can call a geographical or territorial speech. He draws a rhetoric cartography with words. This means that, during the speech, he travels through the different territorial categories to which Morocco belongs with the aim of emphasizing the necessity of unity.

Firstly, he tries to express Morocco's will to strengthen the ties that link the kingdom to the neighboring State of Algeria. This way, Mohammed VI establishes the atmosphere for an hypothetical reconciliation and normalization of the relationships between the two countries. The creation of this dialogue atmosphere also helps in the process of symbolically neutralizing the political ties that link Algeria to the Sahrawi question.

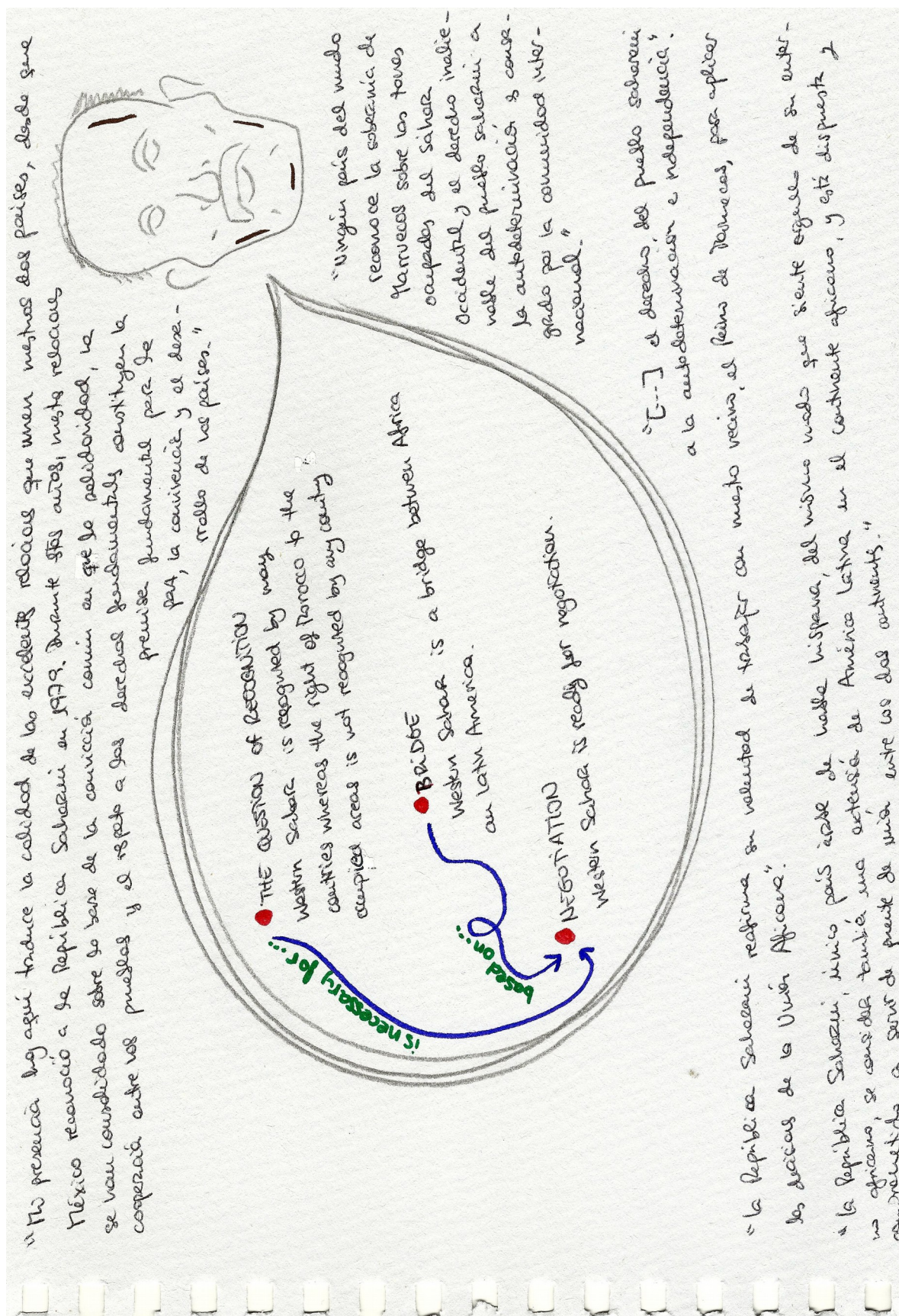
Then, Mohammed VI stresses the importance of achieving a united Maghreb. He maintains that the similarities between the different regional actors justify that unity. It is implied that Western Sahara will also be included in this united Maghreb since it also shares these similarities.

The third cartographic reference of Mohammed VI is Africa. He argues that Morocco belongs to Africa and also defends the necessity of unity in the continent.

Finally, he refers to the territorial unity of Morocco. This territorial unity must be achieved, there seems to be no other option. That unity can be achieved by integrating Western Sahara as an autonomous province.

Mohamed VI's speech, thus, is based in a single concept: unity. This unity is articulated with regard to different contexts: the relationship with Algeria, the development of the Maghreb region, the development of Africa and the development of Morocco. Unity is based on homogeneity: Mohammed VI always stresses the similarities between the different cartographic entities that he refers to.

The aim of the speech, that is delivered on the 43rd anniversary of the Green March, is to reinforce certain geographical categories in order to place the Sahrawi question in a position that benefits the Moroccan objectives. Mohammed VI produces a geopolitical atmosphere based on references to alliances, belonging ties and similarities so that the question of Western Sahara and its integration in the Moroccan Kingdom appears as a natural solution.



16 Transcript: <https://www.spsrasd.info/news/es/articles/2018/11/30/18614.html>, accessed April 4th, 2019.

Brahim Ghali's speech follows a rhetorical strategy that is very similar to the strategy followed by Mahmoud Abbas in the speech that has already been analyzed in previous pages. Ghali also starts his speech by addressing the question of recognition. He refers both to the recognition of Western Sahara and to the recognition of the Moroccan occupied territories. He argues that whereas nobody recognizes the right of Morocco to occupy the Sahrawi territories, many countries recognize the SADR (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic). Thus, the question of recognition also helps Ghali to place Western Sahara in the international agenda and to dismiss the idea that Morocco's existence is not questioned by any country.

An existential consequence is always implied in the question of recognition. In the Sahrawi case, as well as in the Palestinian case, existence is not only achieved as a result of an internal effort or sacrifice. Existence has to be recognized internationally in order to be effective.

Ghali –in the same way that Abbas does– also maintains that Western Sahara is ready for negotiation. Thus, he does not deny the will of Western Sahara to talk to Morocco.

We have to be aware that Ghali is sending his speech in front of a Mexican audience and he also underlines the role of Western Sahara as a bridge that links Latin America to Africa. Ghali argues that this link is based on the common linguistic background, since Western Sahara is the only African State where Spanish is spoken.

The image of the bridge is specially interesting. Ghali makes Western Sahara appear as a State that facilitates connection, negotiation and communication. The bridge can be described in this specific context as one of the antonyms of the border. The bridge allows alliances to develop, whereas the border blocks that exchange or makes it difficult to achieve.

In these four last speeches the construction of the *bordered other* is not addressed. Instead, there are references to the border itself. Netanyahu as well as Abbas talk about the different mechanisms involved in the border (racism, apartheid, temporariness...) –Netanyahu tries to deny them and Abbas tries to raise awareness about them– and each of them also talks about the necessity of Israel and Palestine –respectively– to be recognized. On the other hand, Mohammed VI and Brahim Ghali do not mention the border, but both of them highlight the importance of defining the State – Mohammed VI tries to define it by defending territorial unity; and Brahim Ghali, by developing the importance of international recognition of Western Sahara. This way, both of them are talking about the border implicitly. The border, then, appears as a tool for definition: Israel currently develops a temporary border intentionally in order to achieve a future defined border; Palestine needs the border to define the difference between Israel and Palestine; Morocco's territorial unity implies a border that contains and defines it; Western Sahara needs definition to be recognized.

2. NEWSPAPERS ON BORDERS

Paola Suárez Ávila when describing the borderlands of Tijuana-San Diego (that is part of the US-Mexico border) as an ecosystem that produces crime argues that “los medios de comunicación han jugado un papel importante en la construcción de este ideario sobre la frontera” (Suárez Ávila 2007, 29). Acknowledging the important role of the mass media in the production of the border is the reason why I decided to analyze the way newspapers talk about it.

In this section, I analyze several articles written in three Spanish newspapers (*eldiario.es*, *El País* and *La Razón*) addressing the decision of the European Court of Human Rights to sentence Spain to pay 10.000€ to two immigrants that were repelled at the border of Melilla in 2014. I analyze the articles that have been written in these three newspapers just after the decision of the European Court was taken, between October 3rd, 2017 and October 9th, 2017, and I do so with the aim not only of analyzing the content of the articles, but also the importance given to a certain issue, such as the one already mentioned, by each one of the media. First, I provide three relatograms that show how the issue has been told by each newspaper. After that, I provide two tables that compare the characteristics of the three newspapers and the style developed by each one to address the issue. Finally, I make some remarks on how the rhetorical way of building the border developed by these three newspapers implies the (re)production of a colonial ontology of the border.

The relatograms are very different from the previous ones because the strategies developed by each newspaper to provide information about the issue were also diverse: *La Razón* published only one article on the question, whereas *eldiario.es* was very prolific and provided the readers with a historical and social contextualization of the issue through the seven articles that were published. On the other hand, *El País* decided to use two different platforms for providing information: the newspaper itself and a blog belonging to the newspaper. Therefore, the manner that each newspaper chose to *tell the story* is relevant for the analysis.

The density of information in each newspaper is also represented in the relatograms. The space provided for each relatogram is the same (A4 paper). This implies that the relatogram that represents the distribution of information of *eldiario.es* becomes a baroque and overdecorated image, whereas the relatogram that represent the distribution of information of *La Razón* becomes a minimalist image. Reflecting on the distribution of information in each newspaper can be useful to think about how the importance of a certain event is considered depending on ideological reasons.

1^o (October 3, 2017 / 10:27h)

"El Tribunal de Estrasburgo condigna que las devoluciones en caliente del Gobierno son ilegales".
The article explains that the European Court of Human Rights has sentenced Spain to pay 10.000€ to two migrants that were repelled at the Spanish southern border in 2014. It is also argued that this sentence implies the fact that Spain's push-backs of migrants are illegal.

2^o (October 3, 2017 / 12:19h)

"FOTOS: Estas son las devoluciones ilegales que el Gobierno ha hecho en la frontera".
A series of pictures that show how the police carries out push-backs at the Spanish southern border.

3^o (October 3, 2017 / 19:55h)

"Los autos que el Gobierno ha ignorado sobre la ilegalidad de las devoluciones en caliente".
The article evidences how, long previous to the European Court of Human Rights' sentence, different structures, organizations, and collective such as ACNUR, NGOs, European institutions, political parties and jurists, had already claimed that push-backs were illegal.

4^o (October 3, 2017 / 21:30h)

"Estrasburgo desactiva la teoría del Gobierno para amparar en la ley las devoluciones en caliente". This article develops the way how the European Court of Human Rights has deactivated Spain's attempts to justify push backs, which are based on the concept of the "extended border

5^o (October 5, 2017 / 12:31h)

"El presidente de Melilla pide 'subir la valla' si no se puede devolver ilegalmente a quienes la saltan".
The article reproduces and comments the words said by Melilla's President, who maintained that the fences of Ceuta and Melilla would need to be higher if the European Court of Human Rights' sentence is accepted, because it would attract illegal immigrants to Europe again.

6^o (October 5, 2017 / 12:55h)

"Bruselas tendrá que responder si avanzará para que el Gobierno deje de expulsar ilegalmente a migrantes". The article describes the way how different Spanish politicians working within European institutions are asking Brussels to take actions that ensure that push-backs are effectively forbidden.

7^o (October 5, 2017 / 19:20h)

"Se la negación hasta la condena judicial: 15 años de devoluciones en caliente en España". This article is an historical overview of the Spanish management of the southern border during the last fifteen years: from the initial containment of the push-backs, followed by the attempt to legitimize them in 2015, to the sentence of the European Court in 2017.

THE NEWSPAPER

(October 4, 2017 / 18:20h)

Estebancho condena a España por la expulsión irregular de dos inmigrantes en Melilla."

The stories of the two immigrants that were irregularly repelled at the Spanish southern border in 2014 are described and the sentence of the European court of Human Rights is explained.

BLOG "MIGRADOS", BELONGING TO THE NEWSPAPER

(October 4, 2017 / 9:50h)

"Si solo fueran dos..."

The article analyzes the sentence of the European Court as well as what happened to the two immigrants that were repelled at the border in 2014, but it also refers to the high amount of other migrants that have also suffered the same, but whose stories have not been taken into account in any legal process. Despite this, it is argued that the sentence of the European court of 2017 constitutes a precedent for the future.

(October 3, 2017 / 12:30h)

"Estanburgo condena a España

por dos 'devoluciones en caliente' en

Melilla."

Description of the sentence of the
European Court of Human Rights
and the stories of the two immigrants
repelled at the border in 2014.

COMPARING NEWSPAPERS

	<i>ELDIARIO.ES</i>	<i>EL PAÍS</i>	<i>LA RAZÓN</i>
First appeared in	2012	1976	1998
Dependency / autonomy	Edited by the company Diario de Prensa Digital S.L, the 70% of which depends on people working in the newspaper itself.	Edited by the media company Grupo Prisa, which focuses on the fields of culture, information, entertainment, education and news.	Edited by the media company Grupo Planeta, which focuses on the fields of culture, information, entertainment, education and news.
Description of the medium (main interests, editorial line, values, structure, way of working, etc)	<p>Lot of information easily available in the website.</p> <p>Information about funding, members of the project, sections, editorial line (etc) is available.</p>	<p>Little information easily available in the website.</p> <p>Only the name of sections and the contact information is available as well as little information about its origins.</p>	<p>Little information easily available in the website.</p> <p>Only the name of sections and those in charge of each section as well as the contact information is available.</p>
Printed and digital medium?	Only digital.	Printed and digital.	Printed and digital.
Position in ranking of digital media in Spain (March 2017, comScore)	7	2	17

COMPARING THE WAY NEWSPAPERS ADDRESS INFORMATION

	<i>ELDIARIO.ES</i>	<i>EL PAÍS</i>	<i>LA RAZÓN</i>
Number of articles regarding the sentence of the European Court of Human Rights that condemns Spain to pay 10.000€ to two immigrants	7 (one of them is a photo gallery)	2 (one of them is an entry of one of the blogs belonging to the newspaper)	1

repelled at the southern border in 2014 (between October 3 rd and October 9 th , 2017)			
Style	<p>Mainly analytical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual analysis. Historical background. Focus on the political and social environment surrounding the event: laws, collectives, institutions, organizations, discourses, concepts, etc. <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “A pesar de las advertencias acerca de la ilegalidad intrínseca a las devoluciones en caliente de organismos como el Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (Acnur) o el Consejo de Europa y numerosas ONG, el Ejecutivo insistió en regularlas en su legislación y llevarlas a cabo de forma sistemática en cada salto de las vallas de Ceuta y Melilla.” - “En este sentido, el Tribunal de Estrasburgo concluye que 'no cabe duda de que los hechos del presente caso corresponden a la jurisdicción de España'. Esta 	<p>Mainly descriptive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the event. Focus on what happened, the event: the sentence of the European Court of Human Rights and the stories of the two immigrants repelled at the Spanish border in 2014. The entry of the blog delves more into contextual analysis. <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “España deberá pagar 10.000 euros a dos inmigrantes africanos que fueron expulsados de forma irregular y en contra de sus deseos en agosto de 2014.” - “Los inmigrantes, identificados por el tribunal con las iniciales N.D y N.T, procedían de Malí y Costa de Marfil. N.D. nació en 1986. N.T, en 1985. El primer había llegado a Marruecos en marzo de 2013; el segundo, a finales de 2012.” 	<p>Mainly demonstrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abundance of literal quotes. Focus on what happened, the event. <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Estrasburgo condena a España por dos 'devoluciones en caliente' en Melilla.” - “El Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos (TEDH) condenó hoy a España por la devolución en caliente a Marruecos de dos inmigrantes en la valla de Melilla sin ser identificados, lo que 'supone una expulsión de carácter colectivo', contraria al Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos.” - “El 13 de agosto de 2014 los inmigrantes fueron esposados y entregados a las autoridades marroquíes 'contra su voluntad' y 'sin ninguna medida administrativa o judicial previa'.

	frase supone un golpe para la estrategia de Interior, que incluye la reforma en la Ley de Extranjería, para legitimar las devoluciones en caliente e intentar 'transformarlas' en 'rechazo en frontera'.”		
Pictures	One picture illustrating each article. One of the articles consists of a photo gallery that gathers different pictures showing the police repelling immigrants at the Spanish southern border. The photo captions explain what is happening in each picture (which implies both a description and an analysis of what is shown) and where and when it took place.	One picture showing both a police agent and an immigrant climbing one of the fences of the border structure in Melilla. The policeman is kicking the immigrant in his right arm, but the photo caption says “Un grupo de inmigrantes subsaharianos se enfrenta a un policía tras saltar la valla de Melilla”, <i>A group of sub-Saharan immigrants fight a policeman after having climbed the fence of Melilla</i> (translation from Spanish is my own).	One picture showing a group of policemen politely repelling two immigrants. No signs of violence are shown. The photo caption says: “Según el fallo, los demandantes fueron expulsados inmediatamente, 'sin que antes tuvieran acceso a intérpretes y a una asistencia jurídica’”, <i>According to the sentence, the plaintiffs were immediately repelled, 'without having access to translators or any legal assistance'</i> (translation from Spanish is my own).

Although the way of *telling* of these three different newspapers is not homogeneous, there is a common factor that makes them reproduce a certain image about the border. The three of them explain why the European Court of Human Rights has sentenced Spain to pay 10.000€ to two immigrants. The three of them tell the stories of these two immigrants. And some of them, such as *eldiario.es*, also contextualizes the cases and explains what the situation in Spain is in order to understand what happened. However, none of the media describe the context of the immigrants. They only specify where the immigrants come from, but it seems as if their lives begin at the border, when they arrive to Morocco, camp on the Gurugu Mountain and try to cross (climb, jump) the fences of Ceuta and Melilla. This way, following the narrative developed by the newspapers, immigrants become inhabitants of the border itself. They have no background. This produces a normalization of the situation of immigrants since they are rhetorically built as *beings-of-the-border*. The border becomes their natural (biological, ontological) home, the ecosystem to which

they belong.

It is true that some of these newspapers sometimes publish special reports or articles to delve into the reasons why immigrants *come* to Europe. These *special issues* include interviews with immigrants and their families, detailed descriptions of the routes immigrants follow as well as the dangers they face. However, there is never a deep analysis of how the border is built (physically and rhetorically) and how it affects the lives of those crossing a fence (ontologically). The contextualization usually refers to the *inside* (Europe, the United States of America, the West, the North); it only refers to the *outside* (the Global South) sporadically; and, when the contextualization of the *outside* is made, most of the times it is influenced by the colonial matrix of power, as Walter D. Mignolo calls it. Of course, there are economic and material reasons not to always being analyzing the context of the *outside*. Some media do not have the money to send reporters and journalists to Palestine or Mexico, for example, every time something happens there. However, collaborations with local newspapers can be done and, if it does not work, it is always possible to explain where the limits of the discourse that is being reproduced when writing an article are.

Here I provide a paragraph coming from the entry to the blog *Migrados* entitled “Si solo fueran dos...” and written by Lola Hierro that clearly illustrates this *normative* point of view regarding borders that is developed by the media:

Que haya una sentencia condenatoria para España es una buena noticia para las organizaciones en defensa de los migrantes. De hecho, la denuncia fue presentada por varias de ellas y ACNUR la corroboró aportando vídeos y testimonios. También es una buena noticia para los hombres y mujeres migrantes que correrán o han corrido la misma suerte que estos dos chicos (Hierro 2017).

Hierro explains that the sentence of the European Court of Human Rights is a good new for organizations that help migrants, such as ACNUR, and *also* for migrants. The fact that the organizations are mentioned in the first place and migrants in the second place is not casual. It is, indeed, causal: it is caused by an embodied colonial point of view that facilitates the reproduction of the colonial matrix of power.

Beyond this, there is something interesting in the way how one of the newspapers addresses and analyzes the question of borders. *Eldiario.es* explains that the Government of Spain tried to justify the illegal push-backs of immigrants at the southern border of Ceuta and Melilla by arguing that, following what is written in the Ley Orgánica de Protección de la Seguridad Ciudadana:

Los extranjeros que sean detectados en la línea fronteriza de la demarcación territorial de Ceuta o Melilla mientras intentan superar los elementos de contención fronterizos para cruzar irregularmente la frontera podrán ser rechazados a fin de impedir su entrada ilegal en España (BOE 2015, 27242).

It means that, in order to officially arrive to Spain (and, consequently, to Europe), immigrants have to surpass all the obstacles that are part of the structure and the complex architecture of the

barrier, including the police agents. This is why *eldiario.es* maintains that the Government is developing a strategy in front of the European Court of Human Rights based on the narrative of the “frontera flexible”, the *flexible border*, or the expanded border.

The concept of the expanded border can work as an analytical tool, as it has already been used in previous chapters of this PhD Thesis with the aim of understanding the way how borders work; but it can also be used to perform the border. When the Government of Spain establishes that part of the structure of the border are the police agents, it means that the structure of the border has in fact no end. It becomes variable, flexible, adaptable. And, what is more important, it becomes ambiguous, which makes it possible to repel immigrants without skipping the law. The interdependence between what is said and written (the law) and how the border works, is in this case, obvious. The law establishes what the border is (clarifying that the police agents are, indeed, the border, too) and the border (which includes the police agents) embodies the law. The relationship between words and structures is clear.

This case is also an example of how concepts do not simply depend on what they mean, but on what they do, as Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze argued in *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*: “The exegetical meaning (what is said about the thing) is only one element among others, and is less important than the operative use (what is done with the thing) or the positional functioning (the relationship with other things in one and the same complex)” (Guattari and Deleuze 1983, 181). When I, as a researcher, use the concept of the *flexible* or the *expanded border*, I try to show how the border works (based on my observations): I provide a point of view from where to look at the border; whereas when a Spanish minister uses it, s/he can try either to make the border work in a certain way (to produce the border), or to explain that the border actually works *that* way (to justify what happens *there*, to threaten and discourage future immigrants or to clarify possible misinterpretations); or both. And, of course, a newspaper such as *eldiario.es*, also uses the concept to *do things*. This medium has a left-wing editorial line and it usually questions the decisions taken by the former ruling right-wing political party, the Popular Party (PP). So, when *eldiario.es* says “flexible border”, the concept has to be understood as an important piece or gear that is part of a bigger rhetorical machinery built with the aim of criticizing the way of doing of the Government.

3. INTERVIEWS

Questionnaires were sent to several European citizens and non-European citizens (some of them living in Europe, though) with the aim of gathering their points of view concerning a topic such as *the border*. The information that I present in this section comes from the answers some of them provided. Not all the participants sent the questionnaires back. The questionnaires included two simple and broad questions:

- Describe yourself.
- What is a border?

I first asked them to describe themselves in order to know from where they were talking, to know the position from where they spoke. This way, the information they provided could be situated and contextualized. Knowledge, information and discourses are always situated, as Donna Haraway argued in her book *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women The Reinvention of Nature* (1991). Participants (I do not use the word *informant* intentionally) were not forced to share any specific information such as their age, their gender or their profession. Talking about these fields was up to them. Questionnaires sometimes impose certain constraints and force people to answer questions in a specific way. I did not want participants to provide data, but to provide the subjective description of themselves. The only specific criterion to select the participants was their spatial location –where they were living their lives–. The fact that each of them comes from a different context implies that they sometimes use specific categories, terms and expressions to talk about borders that are linked to their spatial frame of reference. This way, their words become representative –in a broad way– of different approaches to the border. I also made the decision of sending questionnaires instead of developing face-to-face interviews because I wanted participants to feel free to spend as much time as they wanted to answer the questions. The fact that participants could decide how, where and when they would answer the questionnaires as well as what they would say was also a way of respecting their intimacy and privacy. Finally, participants could also choose the language to answer the questions. I gave them six options: English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Dutch or Portuguese, which are the languages I can read and understand.

The second question was asked in a very broad way on purpose so that participants could address as many ideas related to the topic as possible. There were no limits. Talking about the border was the only rule. Providing participants with such a wide space to answer the questions made it possible to receive questionnaires that were answered in a very poetic way, for example. This means that participants did not only reflect on the topic, but also on the way how to share their thoughts. They were being creative and designed different strategies to develop their arguments and

ideas. Therefore, the aesthetics of their answers is as relevant and expressive as the content of their responses.¹⁷

DESCRIBE YOURSELF	WHAT IS A BORDER?
<p>I am a 32-year-old doctoral student living in New York City and studying art history with the goal of working as a university professor or art museum curator. My father is a photographer and professor from the state of New Mexico, where his family has lived for centuries. I do not know everything about my heritage on his side of the family and am wary of putting too much faith in DNA tests, but I do know that like many New Mexican families our roots comprise a mixture of Spanish/European, indigenous, and perhaps Middle Eastern and African roots that are the result of the Mexican and Spanish settlers that set up outposts on indigenous land. Growing up in New Mexico has profoundly shaped me and informs the direction of my doctoral research: Mexican American and Chicano (a political term employed by activists during the U.S. Civil Rights Movement beginning in the 1960s and '70s) art in the Southwestern states of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, all of which share a border with Mexico. After finishing high school in New Mexico, I dreamed of living in Boston and New York, and ended up completing undergraduate and master's degrees in Boston. I also lived for several years in Spain, worked at a museum in a small college town in New York state close to where my mother grew up, and am now living in New York City. Since I focus on the art of Latin America and its diasporas, I have found living in larger cities with more significant immigrant populations like Boston, New York (as well as Bilbao and Madrid, Spain, where I have also spent time) to be immensely eye-opening when juxtaposed with my experiences growing up in the Southwestern U.S.</p>	<p>I am a firm believer in the eradication of geopolitical borders. One cannot turn on the news without hearing yet another example of the ways in which the juridical spaces created by national borders inscribe incalculable suffering on the bodies of those who, by no fault of their own, find themselves on the wrong "side". Yet as a historian of a region that has for literally centuries been defined by the vicissitudes of its borders and has developed a uniquely rich culture around them as a result, I also find borders to be fascinating spaces that engender endlessly complex phenomena. I am always on the lookout for new approaches to theories of the borderlands that help account for their mutability and incomensurability. I believe that if we as a society had a more nuanced understanding of how those operating within a borderlands positionality lived, the world might be in a more hopeful place than it currently is. Beyond the national, I find myself drawn to the indeterminacy and dynamism that characterizes "borderlands" experiences informed by issues of race, class, gender, and other factors in all their multilayered complexity.</p>
<p>Soy mujer, joven, precaria, queer, bollera, blanca, Europea, privilegiada, neurótica, miope, perezosa, sana y enferma.</p>	<p>Una frontera es cualquier límite impuesto o auto-impuesto que nos/me impide el contacto/relación/mirada/conciencia de/con la Otredad (sea esta todo aquello que está al otro lado de esa frontera). La frontera siempre se da/existe mientras haya un pensamiento auto-referencial del yo respecto a lo otro,</p>

¹⁷ I am aware that this type of interviews implies that only people who know how to read and write can answer them, This is one of the limits of these interviews.

	<p>fuera del yo. La frontera es línea, es círculo, es aire y es agua, en cualquier caso es siempre construida como elemento que separa. La frontera es también un arma de empoderamiento o liberación por parte del colonizado del colonizador (colonizador = diferentes autoridades opresoras, políticas, sociales, culturales y familiares, locales y globales o de diferente grado relacional). La frontera es espacio y materia.</p>
<p>Mujer, 29casi30. Mexicana, hija de una chilena y un mexicano. Bailarina, bailadora, maestra y coreógrafa. Filósofa de corazón. Feminista, buena amiga, partidaria de los abrazos bien apretados.</p>	<p>Las fronteras ayudan cuando un algo o un alguien está formando su identidad, pero estorban cuando la diferencia pone mayor o menor valor en aquello del otro lado y se vuelve lo más importante o lo único que define a ese algo o alguien.</p> <p>Las fronteras sirven para contener, lo de adentro para afuera, lo de afuera para adentro.</p>
<p>I'm Asala Salhab ,23 years old studied pharmacy at Al -Quds university in the east of Jerusalem. Started working as a medical representative for a medical company since my third year in university, I also started working for Al-Horreyah Radio in Hebron/West bank as a radio presenter on a weekly kid's talk show, for seven years now.</p> <p>I have always been an ambitious person, working hard so I can reach my full potential. Drama and theatre activities, especially, have long been of great interest to me – I have been involved in many drama sessions and plays, and took part in a theatre festival in Greece in 2010. I started volunteering at the Hebron Youth Development Resource Center (YDRC) in 2010, where I participated in many leadership workshops, technology sessions and drama courses. Additionally, the YDRC selected me to represent the organization in an Intel Clubhouse Teen Summit, which took place in Boston in July 2012. I also volunteered as a training facilitator with “Art for Social Change“ in the YDRC, a program that aims to bring Palestinian artists together to use their art as tools for social change. During my time as a university student , I did many extracurricular activities; I represented Al Quds University in a student exchange program to Sultanate Oman. Moreover, I was selected by U.S. Consulate</p>	<p>Borders are important to keep and enrich each country's culture and tradition , if there was no borders all the cultures will emerge and lose their features. Yet, it's important to work on making it easy on people from different countries to be able to visit other countries without visas which are economically exhausting.</p>

<p>General Jerusalem to participate in The Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSIs) program which took place in Bard college, NY for six weeks. Moreover, I participated in an Erasmus+ Youth in Action project on Social Inclusion of Migrants in Izmir/Turkey and I got selected to participate in another same Erasmus+ project in Berlin/Germany in the beginning of September 2018.</p>	
<p>Hello Everyone, My name is AL. I'm a Chinese guy came from China on November in 2008.</p> <p>I finished my University and worked one year in my city. The beginning reason that I came to Spain was study something more and learn Spanish, two or three years then come back to China. Find a good job. Within these three years. I feel more free here. So I decide to work here in Madrid to know more about this city. The first Spanish city I stepped on.</p>	<p>The Border for me is The Border. The line of separation between two countries. Physically and Culturally. But the people can communication and mover freely with the permission by both countries. Legally! We are in 21st century. Not a primitive society. For something good is good without the border. Look like Union Europa. For that is necessary agreement between those countries. But if we look in the <i>bad</i> side, ISIS/DRUGS/VIOLENCE/WEAPONS/RELIGION/POLITICIAN...ETC</p> <p>Look Spain now, Economically not good, the political instability, the Spanish people have a lot of unemployed. They don't have work, someone do not ever have to eat. The government still have to accept so many illegal immigrants. After coming to Spain, did illegal things, undermined public order and disrupted people's lives. I can't think what the future is going to happen without Border. This is only Spain. How many countries do we have on the earth.</p> <p>What will happen without country or Border. And your own family?</p> <p>For me at the moment it is necessary.</p>
<p>Saharai nacido en los Campamentos de Tinduf en el ocaso de la Guerra por la Independencia. Internacionalista convencido y, amante de la paz y los Derechos Humanos.</p> <p>Me considero nacionalista saharai, y si bien, hay quien considera el nacionalismo como un concepto antagónico del internacionalismo, pues generalmente, lo primero es excluyente y puede ser el germen de la xenofobia y el racismo, mientras que lo segundo defiende todo lo contrario; a mi juicio, el nacionalismo, cuando se limita a la defensa de la patria y la identidad de un pueblo, identidad, de la que se es consciente que va a evolucionar</p>	<p>Según el sentido que se les quiera dar a las fronteras puedo mostrarme a favor o en contra.</p> <p>Si las fronteras son entendidas como el mecanismo para dividir el mundo e impedir a los seres humanos transitar libremente, sin obstáculos, como iguales en Derechos y oportunidades. Estoy en contra de estas.</p> <p>Si las fronteras son entendidas como el símbolo que delimita la acción de un pueblo concreto y, que le sirve para desarrollar su identidad, sus usos y costumbres, y ejercer en él su soberanía jurídica y cultural, me parece que son necesarias.</p>

<p>por el transcurrir de los años y la influencia de otros Pueblos e identidades, haciéndose cada vez más rica esa identidad, pero que aún con sus variaciones por la acción del tiempo va a seguir definiendo un colectivo con una idiosincrasia concreta y diferente al resto, no es incompatible con el internacionalismo, y por lo tanto, no puede ser ni xenófoba ni racista.</p> <p>Lo cierto es que, mi pueblo, que es de ascendencia beduina y nómada, acostumbrado al mestizaje cultural e ideológico, siempre fue nacionalista y al mismo tiempo internacionalista, siempre entendió el mundo como una aldea global donde cabían todas las identidades, y al mismo tiempo se mantuvo celoso para preservar la suya propia.</p> <p>Un dicho saharauí con el que me identifico es: ili adjal gaba yizgui zagui tuyur-ha que literalmente es: el que entre en una selva que cante el canto de sus pájaros (a donde fueres haz lo que vieres -Andaluz-). Este dicho resume mi forma de ver el mundo y la manera de entenderlo, a mi juicio, que tiene el Pueblo saharauí.</p>	<p>Si bien los seres humanos somos iguales en Derechos, no necesariamente esa igualdad en derechos tiene que traducirse en, igualdad en identidad; ni mucho menos, precisamente, esa diferencia en identidad de los Pueblos que pueblan el mundo es la que lo enriquece. El valor de las fronteras en este caso tiene la utilidad de preservar o delimitar una parcela.</p>
<p>Je m'appelle Said, j'ai 24 ans, j'habite au Maroc, étudiant en master Didactique du FLE à l'Université Ibn Zohr Agadir.</p>	<p>Alors pour ce que me concerne mon avis à propos les frontières, la première chose qui me tombe sur ma tête c'est tout ce qui a une relation avec les droits de douanes, les produits exportés ou importés. Et comment les États se discutent à propos de ces produits pour qu'ils puissent entrer dans leurs pays.. économiquement parlant, lorsque on parle de la libre échange ou du protectionnisme.</p> <p>D'un autres côté, nous pouvons dire, que les frontières ce sont les lignes qui séparent un pays à un autre, et aucun pays entre eux ne peut dépasser cette qu'à travers une autorisation écrite... Sans parler bien sûr des émigrés qui viennent s'installer dans un tel ou tel pays.</p> <p>Ou la guerre acharnée entre les armées d'un pays avec des groupes d'une telle ou telle organisation.</p> <p>C'est que je peut vous dire à propos la question que vous m'avez posée.</p> <p>Je sais pas si j'ai bien répondu ou non.</p>
<p>My name is Dan. I am from Israel, although my family comes from Poland. I am of course Jewish. I am a homosexual and proud to be so. I work in science: I am a</p>	<p>Borders are necessary to recognize where a country starts and ends. In a country like mine, borders are very important to guarantee the survival of the nation – we are</p>

physicist in one of the best centres in the world.

surrounded by dangerous and inestable contries and we are subject to constant terrorist attacks. I know that it's not the case in Europe, where people forget how necessary borders are and like to criticize what happens in Israel. We need borders to survive and thrive. Arabs also need borders to know who is on the other side.

Some of the ideas in common between the different participants concerning the topic of borders are:

- Borders are limits.
- They are both physical –walls, fences– and symbolic –cultural–.

The two first interviewees describe borders as artificial –geopolitical– structures based on unbalanced power relationships. Their artificial nature comes from its symbolic dimension: they are ideas that sometimes become architectural structures. The fact that they cause violence implies that they are built by those in power, those who have the means to make borders become real with the aim of avoiding the *other*. Therefore, they are unilateral structures that do not work in the same way in both sides of the line. Security forces, the police, the architectural structures are there to repel the *other* and protect the *same*. Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson in *Border as Method, or the Multiplication of Labor* (2013) warn of the dangers of an oversimplified perspective about the border. This oversimplified perspective that explains borders only as tools for exclusion is, nevertheless, being popularized. The interviews that were conducted among a small number of EU citizens reproduce this oversimplified perspective in a certain way: the border is mainly seen as a mechanism for exclusion, separation or division. There is no reflection on its role as a tool for the management of space, for the claim of national sovereignty, for occupation, etc. This is not the case in these two examples, where the border is also mentioned as a mechanism for resistance and where borderlands are described as complex environments.

The two following interviewees describe borders as necessary artifacts for the development of a self-identity, but they also highlight the problems borders imply when they become insuperable obstacles. This is a position that is also shared by the fifth interviewee –the Sahrawi refugee (he does not provide his/her name)–. They argue that borders are necessary not because they protect *us*, but because they guarantee that certain identities, cultures and traditions remain in existence, such as the Palestinian, the Mexican or the Sahrawi (with all the diversity they imply). However, they argue that this type of borders that allow for the survival of many identities must also allow for the displacement of people. This way, they describe a type of border that works as the skin of a body: it allows for delimitation but also for contact. This comparison is also developed by Régis Debray in

his book *Éloge des Frontières* (2010). Dan, also emphasizes the importance of borders to defend his own existence –and to defend Israel's existence as a nation and as a state–. However, he stresses the use of borders as a more hermetic mechanism and mentions terrorism as one of the reasons that justifies this position.

On the other hand, AL says that borders are necessary in order to fight against certain dangers such as ISIS, migrants, or unemployment, which can be related to the US and EU rhetorical strategies to justify the existence of borders.

Finally, Said reflects on borders only in relation to economy, geography and bureaucracy.

By listening to these voices one can conclude that the border is conceptualized not only and necessarily as a device used for performing violence, but also as a strategy for resisting violence; not only as a mechanism for defining the self-in-power and distinguishing it from the *other*, but also for defining the subalternized-self and protecting it from disappearance. The necessary question to ask, then, would be: what type of borders are being developed in Palestine and Western Sahara? Are they borders that demarcate the limits of an identity? Or are they borders built for political management and the pursuit of certain objectives such as the annexation of land? When one argues that borders are necessary, the question will always be: but, what type of borders? The word *border* is not univocal.

Analyzing the international rhetorical context is necessary in order to think about the possibilities and probabilities of a process of peace both in Palestine and Western Sahara. And when I say *international context* I am aware that I mean Europe and the United States of America. I mean the West, the North, and I do it intentionally in order to make the colonial matrix of power visible. There is no real international context without the colonial (im)balance of power. Europe and the United States of America are powerful actors that make important decisions in relation to the Palestinian and the Sahrawi questions and this is why looking at the way discourses are developed in these two particular (yet over-represented) places is crucial to try to predict what might happen to Palestine and Western Sahara. And it seems that European and American leaders are very busy with their own racist policies. They are building their own walls all over *their* world, which makes me wonder: why would they try to break *any* wall? Especially considering that walls such as the Moroccan and the Israeli structures are theoretically built because of the same reasons the Western ones have been created: providing security. The wall has become the political and physical solution to manage migration, the refugee crisis and asylum-seekers' arrivals and also, to manipulate the European and American population under the excuse of providing security. The wall is the rhetorical and material solution to manage fear. Therefore, it is a privileged tool and it seems unlikely that it will be dismantled. Paradoxically, it is in some western and northern contexts where

the anti-walls discourses seem to be more spread out, maybe because there is no real conscience of the violence that a removal of borders imply if it is not accompanied by any deconstruction of coloniality.

On the other hand, the Palestinian and Sahrawi questions are invisible, and have remained invisible for many years –specially the Sahrawi question–. It seems as if there were no conflicts there, or as if conflict had become the idiosyncrasy of both contexts and, consequently, deserves no so much attention, newspapers hardly ever cover any event that happens there –only when *something big* happens–, there is no public debate on the topic; and this has produced a normalization of the conditions under which the Palestinian and the Sahrawi peoples live. The colonial matrix of power, which imposes a hierarchization of priorities (Western and Northern problems first), has caused a *otherization* of the Palestinian and the Sahrawi conflicts. People whose bodies and lives are physically involved in the Palestinian or the Sahrawi conflict do not matter at all. And, if they happen to matter, they do less than any other officially-European or officially-American one¹⁸. This is also related with what Judith Butler maintains in her book *Frames of War, When Is Life Grievable?* (2009). In the introduction to the book, which is a compendium of some of her essays, she argues that a concrete life cannot be considered a *life* if it is not even seen as being *alive* or *living*. And, since these certain lives are not alive, they cannot be lost, and nobody can cry after they *die*: “Specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not first apprehended as living. If certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceivable as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these lives are never lived nor lost in the full sense” (Butler 2009, 1). This means there are certain –racialized, feminized, othered, colonized (etc)– lives that do not deserve the attention of the West-North, neither the contexts where they develop and try to survive.

However, at the same time that the Palestinian and the Sahrawi conflicts remain invisible, walls and fences are being newly built, re-built or reinforced in the West-North. Élisabeth Vallet and Charles-Philippe David in their article “Introduction: The (Re)Building of the Wall in International Relations” (2012) reflect on the reasons why this “(re)appearance of walls and barriers as key instruments for the protection of state sovereignty” (112) has remained in the shadow for so long. They argue that “the continuing dominance of 'borderless' discourse has led theoreticians to evade the issue of walls and wall-building during the past decade” (*ibid.*).

But the discourse has changed, as it has been described in this chapter. The focus on security has made it possible to justify the wall. Discourses, indeed, have become an important part of the structure of the walls:

18 I say officially-European and officially-American lives since there are certain people within Europe and the United States of America whose lives are also placed at a secondary level: black and/or Muslim people, for example, that are sometimes considered as not-so-European-or-American.

Typically, however, those walls consist of much more than a barrier built on masonry foundations. They are flanked by boundary roads, topped by barbed wire, laden with sensors, dotted with guard posts, infrared cameras and spotlights, and accompanied by an arsenal of laws and regulations (right of asylum, right of residence, visas). We understand the word “wall” in the broadest sense, as a political divider that comprises complex technologies, control methods, legislative provisions and “securing the border” discourse (*ibid.*).

The wall, then, cannot exist without the words that accompany it: laws and public discourses that shape both the legal framework and the social subjectivities. This legal framework and the social subjectivities created on the basis of the *democratic goal* of providing security are another main element of the structures of walls. Without these words, the wall could be jumped with no consequences. The laws allow for consequences to happen and the public discourses on the necessity of security make society justify the existence of the walls. Words work as a magic spell that makes the impregnable wall possible.

And the purpose of these walls, as it has been said, is not only to demarcate a limit, but to manage the ontology: “the purpose of new walls has been not so much to convert a front line into a de facto border as to address two threats: migrants and terrorists (the two sometimes overlap or blend together in the pro-wall discourse)” (*ibid.*, 114). These migrants and terrorists are the *others*. Walls “are reassuring because they provide tangible evidence that governments are doing something” (*ibid.*) in order to make the difference between *us* and *them* remain clear. The wall has become a tool for the conservation of the colonial privilege. That is why, as Vallet and David say, the wall is not disappearing, but transmuting. It serves other purposes that are different from old ones, but the fact is that the wall remains.

However, the border –that is not only the wall– has also become a strategy of management of the world. During the presentation of the book *Border as Method, or the Multiplication of Labor* (2013) in the Traficantes de Sueños Library (Madrid, December 1st, 2018, with Sandro Mezzadra, one of the co-authors, Débora Ávila and Isidro López)¹⁹, the border was described as a strategy for political management. The border has become a method in a world where democracy no longer guarantees rights but security. The border is not the line anymore, nor the wall, but a series of devices and strategies used for the production of space (including architectural strategies, rhetorical strategies, political strategies, social strategies...). This border is not offensive nor defensive, but constitutive: it produces the world and the subjectivities related to that world. Internationally, the border as a method re-emphasizes the State as the agent of international politics, and hierarchy as the normative way of relating to other States. Economically, it justifies austerity measures based on the argument that there is not enough for everyone, which means the others –migrants, racialized bodies, poor bodies– must be expelled from the world. Biopolitically, the border as a method becomes a strategy based on thanatopolitics: it produces the migrant as the *other*, the *criminal* and

19 Online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAqVGUkdE94>, accessed December 17th, 2018.

also as the *victim*, with no agency over his/her own life. The border becomes the form of the world and the stage where power and tensions are played.

4. OCCUPY MOVEMENTS

In her article “Occupy: La dinámica espacial del discurso en los movimientos globales de protesta” (2016), Luisa Martín Rojo briefly summarizes the way that the discourse and the linguistic practice shaped the structure of urban spaces during the occupation of squares (and other public places), performed by different social movements, in the recent years. The type of discourse collectively developed during the occupations implied a new perspective to look at citizenship in relation to the use of space. People wanted to take the space, which implied taking control of the public sphere: “Por eso, los lemas recurrentes en la mayoría de estos movimientos, que podrían resumirse como 'estamos aquí', 'ni en twitter, ni en facebook, estamos en la plaza', 'somos el 99%', y 'no nos representan', indican, efectivamente, que los manifestantes están dispuestos a tomar el control de las instituciones al mismo tiempo que demandan más participación en la vida pública” (Martín Rojo 2016, 618). The re-appropriation of the squares became both an attempt to re-think public space (its physical architectural structure) and an attempt to re-think politics.

The main achievement in the process of spatial re-conceptualization was that these movements made it possible to think about a counter-space. And that counter-space arose from the structure of the normative space itself. Luisa Martín Rojo explains this idea by referring to Lefebvre: “así, el espacio mismo se resiste a su gestión burocrática y posee el germen de un 'contraespacio' [...]” (*ibid.*, 619). Each space, then, contains inside its own structure the seed of a counter-space that opens up the possibility for a new *reality*.

The Occupy movements also provided new strategies for communication that were developed in close relation to spatial practices: the use of different languages, or the importance of social networks and the internet to spread the word, for example, were aimed to improve democratic participation.

In summary, the Occupy movements made it possible again for people to take control over space and the spatial discourse, at least at some level. Thus, after the practice of occupation of several squares that took place all over the world, borders can be considered as one more type of space that can be occupied as well. The political atmosphere that the Occupy movements have created allows that possibility to be imaginable and even feasible. However, the main question to be answered is: is there actually any possibility of occupying the border?

The architectural structure of the square and the border is different. The square allows people to meet other people. One can stay and spend time in the square, whereas the border is meant (not) to be crossed. The square can be understood as a place for duration, whereas the border can be understood as

a space for a moment. However, as it has already been argued, the border is not only a line. The border is sometimes expanded and it becomes an area: the landscape surrounding the wall or the fence becomes an ecosystem in itself. The borderscape is inhabited by bordered-bodies. In these cases, the border can also be understood as a space for duration. On the other hand, the square is sometimes experienced as a space appropriated by the market and the state (and its institutions). In these cases, the square is not a place for meeting anymore, but for bureaucracy and transaction. The specific character and structure of each type of space, though, makes it possible for squares to be more easily occupied and for borders to be more easily intervened. Occupation is related to duration; intervention is related to the moment.

The case of the Occupy movements provides evidence of the interrelationships between the production of space and the production of discourse. Space is re-appropriated not only by using it differently, but also by performing alternative linguistic practices in a certain place. And this *using the space differently* does also underline the normative use of space. By performing what is not supposed to be done in a square, one becomes aware of what is indeed supposed to be done there. The linguistic landscape, meaning the disposition, distribution and dynamics of linguistic signs in space and its connection with society, is a perspective that helps us understand the links between what is said about and what is done in space. However, as it will be argued in the next section, the production of discourses in relation with space also contributes to the process of building subjectivities.

5. LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES

When the term ‘Linguistic Landscapes’ was first coined in the late 1990’s it was used to talk about the way the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street and place names, and commercial signs, combine to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region or city. Since then definitions of linguistic landscapes have expanded to include not just other aspects of the built environment, (buildings, sounds, smells) but also the ways built environments shape how people interact with and in them, and how linguistic landscapes both index and, to some degree, constitute those who inhabit them (H. Jones 2017, 149 – 150).

This definition of the concept of *linguistic landscape*, addresses the interdependence between the space, the word and the body (the subject). The production of space depends not only on the architectural structure, but also on the distribution of linguistic signs in it. These two factors determine the acts and behaviors that would be performed *in* space. One’s practices and identity, as Rodney H. Jones argues in his article “Surveillant landscapes” (2017), is constantly being negotiated with the surrounding discursive and architectural environment. However, the negotiation does not only depend on the way place is read and understood by its inhabitants, but also by the way the inhabitants are read by the space. We, as subject-bodies read and are read. “Most linguistic landscape research, however, is still focused on people reading and writing landscapes” (H. Jones 2017, 150). The problem is that “much less attention has been paid to the way landscapes read and write their inhabitants –that is, the

aspects of built environments that are designed to make people and their actions visible and legible, what I will be calling surveillant landscapes” (*ibid.*).

The surveillant landscape is the one that sees and is seen, that shapes and is shaped, that reads and is read. As Rodney H. Jones explains, the devices that allow for surveillance to be performed can be sophisticated hi-tech cameras, or a simple window. What makes these devices become efficient tools for surveillance is that, thanks to them, we can all be seen and read. The main objective in the development of surveillant landscapes is to make people visible and legible.

Legibility is linked to the production of subjectivities. It “contributes to imbuing our behavior with meaning. Acting ‘nervous’ at a customs checkpoint, for example, means something quite different from acting nervous in a dentist’s office. All environments contribute to imposing on their inhabitants a certain set of rules for social conduct and assumptions about social identity (governing who is supposed to be in a particular place and how they are supposed to act), thus rendering some kinds of people and some forms of behavior as unmarked and others as marked” (*ibid.*, 151 – 152). And the reason why this process of legibility contributes to the process of building subjectivities is that it “operates at the intersection of the material, social, and psychological dimensions of built environments” (*ibid.*).

The inhabitants of a certain space interact with that space and participate in its production, sometimes by resisting it, other times by contributing to the maintenance and reproduction of its normative existence. In both cases, though, the interaction with the space causes an internalization of a series of practices that are “sedimented into people in the form of habits, thoughts and bodily dispositions” (*ibid.*, 178). These habits finally crystallize as an identity and a subjectivity. The body that arises from the process of internalization of certain habits that are imposed by the landscape is called by H. Jones *historical body*, and it does not only have an internal dimension, but also an external one made of “the information that has been gathered about him or her over countless episodes of surveillance, information that sometimes comes to determine the kinds of surveillance practices he or she is subjected to in the future” (*ibid.*). The external dimension of the historical body is possible because “as we transverse surveillant landscapes we leave traces” (*ibid.*, 179). This way, “landscapes become the surfaces upon which we write our historical bodies” (*ibid.*)

Surveillant landscapes, as a very specific type of linguistic landscape that are, nevertheless, constantly present in contemporary societies, are “complex assemblages of discourses, bodies, technologies, and social relationships which help to regulate the flows of people, goods, and information through our societies” (*ibid.*, 181). For the application of the perspective of the linguistic and surveillant landscapes on the analysis of borders provided in this PhD Thesis, however, I look at the linguistic signs that are placed not only in a physical space, but also in a context, a symbolic space made of socio-economic and political relationships. That is why I analyze the discourses and points of view of several actors (politicians, journalists, activists, citizens, *(il)legal* immigrants). Even if the speeches delivered by Trump that have been analyzed were not placed on a physical billboard, they were present in space:

his words were printed on newspapers, broadcast on TV, discussed by people. Linguistic landscapes, as I understand them, are not only defined by the physical presence of the linguistic signs and discourses, but also by their symbolic presence. This symbolic presence is possible because there are always signs that brings us back to discourses. For example, the physical presence of certain Trump's quotes and ideas on billboards (expressed as slogans), during the presidential campaign, are devices that make people think about Trump's discourse (and the symbolic universe he creates when delivering his speeches). The consequence is that linguistic signs that are indeed physically present in the space always refer to absent discourses related to symbolic clusters of ideas. This symbolic dimension of social dynamics is, nevertheless, intimately related to the material conditions in which society develops. As it has already been argued when talking about borders, it is a fact that words and discourses make walls become true. And they also shape the subjectivities related to a certain type of space. The *other* is a conceptual category that determines (and materializes in) the way a person is treated at a checkpoint and it also contributes to the development of a certain subjectivity: *the refugee*, *the illegal immigrant*, *the citizen*. Laws, which are made of words, make it possible for the wall to work. Thus, the relationship between discourses, bodies and spaces is inseparable.

However, “at the same time, this framework also points to ‘cracks’ in surveillant landscapes and reveals tactics that citizens, consumers, and other victims of surveillance can use to re-signify discourses in place, reconfigure interaction orders, and re-inscribe new historical bodies onto surveillant landscapes” (*ibid.*, 182 – 183). That is what will be analyzed in the next chapter. I will focus on artistic practices as strategies to re-appropriate border structures.

PART 3: ART AND BORDERS

CHAPTER 4: ARTISTIC RE-APPROPRIATION OF FRONTIER STRUCTURES

*“We started with small gestures, but we were really searching
for the answers to what we considered
to be important questions”*

Selina Blasco and Lila Insúa¹

This chapter is dedicated to the analysis of several artistic phenomena (art events, art projects, art institutions, artists and artworks) that take place in the two frontier environments that are being studied: the Israeli Separation Barrier in Palestine and the Moroccan Separation Barrier in Western Sahara. I do not focus on artistic processes that happen *on* the wall, but on artistic processes that happen *in, through, on, between* (etc.) the borderscape. The border, as it has been described in the previous chapters, does not end at the wall. It is a broad (social, architectural, subjective...) space where artistic practices take place and participate in the process of producing space. The main goal is to look at the way these artistic phenomena performatively produce a change in the way of perceiving/inhabiting both frontier structures as well as trying to answer the question of what kind of new knowledge art can provide us with regard to these borders.

The focus is on how artistic practice can produce an alternative way of using and relating to borders. Thus, one of the main question is: how can the arts make the *borderscape* become a *walkscape*? How can they produce a change in the way the border works? How can the arts transform the border into a *walkable* environment? This process of making the borderscape become a walkscape is what in this PhD Thesis is called re-appropriation. Re-appropriating the wall mainly consists on inhabiting the wall by developing choreopolitical ways of moving through its structure that have not been planned by the designers of the border.

Walkscape is a concept that was deeply developed by Francesco Careri in *Wakscapes. Walking as an aesthetic practice* (2009). A walkscape is a landscape that comes into existence by practicing the activity of walking. Most of the artworks that are being analyzed in this chapter reflect on ways of moving since the right to access space is one of the main claims both in Palestine and Western Sahara. Therefore, walking (representing any way of moving) becomes a performative activity and also an artistic practice that transforms the border. Sometimes, walking is artistic practice, other times walking allows artistic practice to happen. It can also happen that artistic practice allows

¹ Blasco, Selina and Lila Insúa. *University without credits. A workbook on the arts and their doings*. Madrid: Comunidad Autónoma de Madrid. Servicio de Documentación y Publicaciones.

walking. In all these cases, however, walking becomes an unexpected (unplanned) action. In the introduction to the book by Francesco Careri, Gilles Tiberghien (2009) explains the revolutionary nature of walking by arguing that “walking has always generated architecture and landscape, and that this practice, all but totally forgotten by architects themselves, has been reactivated by poets, philosophers and artists capable of seeing precisely what is not there, in order to make 'something' be there” (Tiberghien 2009, 13).

The fact that, along this chapter and the following ones I focus on how art produces space and re-appropriates the border, does not mean that the artistic practices here analyzed have been developed from this point of view. What I mean is that I look at these artistic practices from a performative point of view and try to explain their way of doing/being from *this* certain perspective that does not have to be the perspective from which the artistic practices were designed. I look at what art does/makes in borderscapes, the relationship between space and art, without denying the existence of multiple and different paths that allowed each artistic practice, artwork or art event to happen.

1. RE-APPROPRIATING THE ISRAELI SEPARATION BARRIER IN PALESTINE

Palestine is a borderland. The border is everywhere and it is impossible to avoid it. It imposes an apartheid choreographication of movements on the Palestinian people. And, as a structure *of* and *for* occupation, it is interrelated with different machineries and strategies such as the apartheid roads, the Israeli settlements, etc. This strategy of occupation has caused the displacement of almost every Palestinian. And even if some of them have managed to stay at their homes, they are symbolically displaced as well since Palestine is not what it used to be anymore, it is not *a home* any longer. This is why Shahd Wadi in her book *Corpos na Trougha. Histórias-Artísticas-de-Vida de Mulheres Palestínianas no Exílio* (2017) argues that all Palestinian bodies are exiled (Wadi 2017, 73). “Palestina é sobretudo a proibição de voltar a casa, a proibição de conhecer a própria casa, e é ainda o sonho de uma casa que não existe no presente” (*ibid.*). Shahd also refers to the importance of looking at the Palestinian people not only as a physical exiled one (as an amount of bodies that have been materially displaced, as a people of refugees), but also as a people that is metaphorically exiled, displaced and repelled, too (*ibid.*). “O povo palestíniano é 'ausente-presente' na casa e no exílio” (*ibid.*, 74-75), and consequently, art made by Palestinian artists is always art made from the exile in a certain way.

Space, and more specifically, frontier space, then, plays a crucial political role in Palestine as it has also been analyzed in the second chapter of this thesis, which has caused the appearance and development of multiple political strategies to re-appropriate it as well. For example, there are

organizations, such as Grassroots Jerusalem, that try to contest the politics of the wall and occupation from the field of cartography. They have made a collaborative map and tourist guide of Jerusalem in which they explain the main elements that take part in the Israeli apartheid and occupation. Also, they organize political tours for *tourists* in Jerusalem to show the reality of occupation in the city. Another example of re-appropriation of space through cartographic strategies is the Nakba Layer created in Google Maps by the Palestinian refugee Thameen Darby in 2006. He created this layer on top of the map of Palestine by taking advantage of the possibilities a tool such as Google Maps provided him with in order to make the villages that were destroyed or depopulated after 1948 visible. These two examples show how cartographic representations of space can also be used to produce a change in the way space is inhabited, experienced and understood.

Beyond cartographic resistance and re-appropriation, there are also other organizations that achieve a re-appropriation of space through sport. This is the case of Wadi Climbing, a company created by two American climbers, Tim Bruns and Will Harris, the objective of which is to provide Palestinians with rock climbing facilities (climbing routes, a boulder gym) and also make it possible for Palestinians to develop a local climbing community, which is now on the rise. Even though the objective of Wadi Climbing is not to create a political strategy for resistance and/or re-appropriation of space, the fact is that the project has made it possible to develop new ways of inhabiting the Palestinian landscape and enjoying the natural milieu in a militarized and bordered environment.

Authors and scholars that have been quoted in the previous chapter for the analysis of the frontier structures in Palestine (Léopold Lambert, Eyal Weizman) have also developed their own ways of re-appropriating space. Lambert and Weizman are not only analyzers, but also architects and they do not only use architectural knowledge to create a very specific way of looking at Israeli occupation but also to combat it. Léopold Lambert, for example, in his own book, *Weaponized Architecture. The Impossibility of Innocence* (2012), dedicates a chapter to the topic of what he calls the *architecture of disobedience* and he suggests and theoretically develops a very specific architectural structure that could be built with the aim of contesting the Israeli colonial architecture. This architectural project, called the Palestinian Qasr, that would potentially be located near the Palestinian city of Salfit, has been designed with the aim of overcoming the main challenges the Israeli occupation imposes, such as territory fragmentation and demolitions, and it is an attempt to fulfill the necessities of two main populations that dramatically suffer the daily consequences of occupation: farmers and Bedouins (Lambert 2012). On the other hand, Eyal Weizman has made it possible to develop a whole discipline based on his critical and questioning perspective regarding the Israeli architecture of occupation. This discipline (that has its own institution based in London) is called *forensic architecture* and it tries to “provide evidence for international prosecution teams,

political organisations, NGOs, and the United Nations in various processes worldwide. Additionally, the agency undertakes historical and theoretical examinations of the history and present status of forensic practices in articulating notions of public truth” (Forensic Architecture 2017). Forensic architecture is now applied to many contexts beyond the Palestinian one, such as Syria or Mexico.

Finally, there are also activist collectives, such as the Palestinian Freedom Riders, that, inspired by the US Freedom Riders that fought the American segregation policies against black people in the 1960's, claim for the dismantling of the Israeli colonial apparatus in Palestine, including the segregated buses, the apartheid roads, the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the movement restrictions for Palestinians, etc.

This PhD Thesis does not address this vast and wide range of possible strategies for resistance and re-appropriation of space in its whole. Instead, it focuses on one specific way of re-appropriating border spaces through artistic practices. One artistic institution (DAAR, Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency), one art event (the Qalandiya International Event) as well as four main artists (Khaled Jarrar, Khalil Rabah, Emily Jacir and Larissa Sansour) are here analyzed.

This analysis focuses on the border and on the bodies that inhabit the border. To understand the relationship between these two elements it is necessary to explain the development of the role of bodies in space linked to the Palestinian national narrative. Traditionally, the nation has been represented through feminine bodies, as colleague Clarisa Danaé Fonseca Azuara is researching through her PhD project “Matria palestina: arte y género en la contrucción de una nación sin límites” in the Departamento de Estudios Árabes e Islámicos y Estudios Orientales (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid). In the case of masculine bodies, the representation of the nation was first related to the creation of a masculine national and young symbol after the Nakba. Several years after that, the masculine body that confronts the Israeli forces during the Intifada was popularized, and now the image of the nation is characterized by its questioning position regarding the possibility of a Palestinian State as well as by the development of the quotidian relationship between the body and memory and the body and architecture (highlighting the obstacles imposed by the Israeli occupation). The focus is on the permanence of the body in the space, as Raji Batish argues:

في الحالة التشكيلية للفن الفلسطيني المعاصر نرى تأثير ما ذكر في تشكيل جسد فنيّ قد استفاد من مرحلة الجسد الفلسطينيّ ما بعد الوطنيّ والمبعثر. فنانون من أمثال رافت حطّاب، حنا ناصر، شريف واكد، هيثم تشارلز حدّاد وغيرهم. فعلى سبيل المثال يلعب رافت حطّاب لعبة الصمود والبقاء كذاكرة مذكّرة وليست مؤنّثة على ساحل فلسطين، حيث تعتبر وظائف التذكير بالجثة المفقودة ومشاعر الفقدان، نسائية بامتياز في ثقافتنا الشعبيّة الفلسطينيّة، بينما تترك للرجال مهمّة انتاج الخلاص الذي لا يأتي أبداً... وهنا تكمن أهميّة أعمال رافت حطّاب كتجسيد لمثل هذه المرحلة الاستيعابية، التي يضطرّ الرجل فيها للقيام بالكثير من الحركات البهلوانية التي تشكّل حدود وظائفه التقليدية

المتوقعة منه، وذلك في طريقه من عمله في إسرائيل وعودته إلى بيته في الضفة عبر الجدار، أو في طريقه للصلاة إذا ما استطاع إليه سبيلاً. وهكذا تتجلى الذاكرة النازفة لدى رأفت كخاصية أنثوية، ولكن بجسد رجل بهورموناته وشعيرات جسده البارزة دون الحاجة لإلغاء النوع الجنسي أو طمسه، لتتجلى الصورة النمطية. يجسّد رأفت حطّاب عبر أعماله المختلفة الجسد الموجوع، ولكنّه الحاضر مادياً وتاريخياً على الشاطيء (في المكان الفلسطيني العميق والأول- يافا) دون أن يضطرّ لاختيار دور جنديّ محدّد يبرّر أخلاقياً هذا الوجود، حيث أنّ الوجود الماديّ على الأرض هو الوجود الواقعيّ الذي ليس بحاجة للإثبات، وتشتدّ حيرته وبالتالي صخبه كلما ثار على "الإجماع الوطنيّ" وكلّما ابتعد عن القوالب الثنائية. فكما أنّ الأجساد المجندرة والرموز الجامعة والثنائيات البنيوية هي من مميزات الدولة الوطنية ونهضتها في أوروبا، ومن ثمّ الشرق في نهاية القرن التاسع عشر، فإنّ رأفت حطّاب ورفاقه الفنّانين هم عبارة عن انعكاس لفشل تكوين الدولة الوطنية في فلسطين، مرة تلو المرة، وبالتالي الفشل في طرح شكل أحاديّ للجسد الذكوريّ البطوليّ الذي هو من رموز وأسس الدولة الوطنية بفرسانها وحماة ديارها. وهكذا نرى أنّ رأفت حطّاب يبذل الأدوار، حيث يندب، ويلطم، وينتف شعره، وينزف ذاكرة، وينبش في أغراض الميتين كما تنبش الجدة في قطن الفراش عن رائحة أولادها الذين هجروا البيت قبل مائة عام ولن يعودوا، فيتخلّى رأفت عن الدور الرجوليّ المعهود المتمثّل في توزيع الوعود والأوهام، ولكنه لا يتخلّى (أي رأفت) عن جسده الذكر الذي يسمح له أن يتقمص دور "حارسة الذاكرة" التي تنثر التراجم بحكم طبيعتها ولا تعد شخصاً بأيّ خير... لأن أصحاب الجسد المابعد-وطنيّ وحدهم يعرفون أنّ ثنائية الألم الرغبة في الفنّ باتت أهمّ

(Raji Bathish 2016).

The use of bodies in borderscapes has been historically related to the development of artistic practices. The Palestinian Journeys' website, for example, contains some articles about the topic. In order to understand the historical ties that link artistic practices to the production of space, one can read the article "رسم خارج الإطار"، that briefly explains the way artists inhabited space during the First Intifada:

لكن مع تضيق الخناق على إمكانية الرّسم على الجدران وتجريمه، ابتدع الفلسطينيون وسائل لحماية أنفسهم وضمان استمرار هذه الإمكانية. فكانوا يرشّون الغرافيتي بالشّيد ليظهر الجدار أبيض اللون عند مرور جنود الاحتلال، ثمّ يرشّون الشّيد بالماء عند رحيلهم فتعود الرسومات والشّعارات على الجدار كما كانت

(Palestinian Journeys 2018).

The aim of this PhD Thesis, though, is to delve into this relationship between the body and space and the ability of the body to inhabit space through *contemporary* artistic practices. I do not address artistic practices with the aim of delving into the understanding of national narratives, but with the aim of analyzing the way space is produced and re-appropriated by bodies that *make art*:

→ DAAR

DAAR (Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency) is

[...] an architectural studio and art residency programme based in Beit Sahour, Palestine. DAAR's work combines conceptual speculations and pragmatic spatial interventions, discourse and collective learning. DAAR explores possibilities for the reuse, subversion and profanation of actual structures of domination: from evacuated military bases to the transformation of refugee camps, from uncompleted governmental structures to the remains of destroyed villages (DAAR 2018).

DAAR is a project that focuses on architecture as the field from which different processes are developed in order to decolonize the space in Palestine. It was founded in 2007 by Eyal Weizman, Sandi Hilal and Alessandro Petti and it also works as an art residency that welcomes “architects, artists, activists, urbanists, film-makers, and curators to work collectively on the subjects of politics and architecture” (*ibid.*). The perspective taken by the creators of the project is based on their objective not to *solve* the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but to work in Palestine with the aim of contributing to the decolonization of architectural structures:

Our architecture is not about determining a utopia of ultimate satisfaction, but simply starting from what exists—the present state of affairs and its material manifestation, from the rubble 'unceasingly piled before our feet'. Our way of work seeks to find and utilize cracks and loopholes within existing colonial systems of separation and control (*ibid.*).

Thus, the main goal, meaning the decolonization of space, is not pursued by taking distance, but the other way around: “instead of critical distance we sought critical proximity” (*ibid.*). However, this *critical proximity*, that implies a necessary attachment to the context and the Palestinian question, does not mean that DAAR is an activist project.

Although our form of research and practice is collective, relational, and active, it would be wrong to think of it as 'activist'. We do not work in an ameliorative manner; we have never proposed the kind of informal architecture we see worldwide promoted as a solution to alleviate poverty; we do not use photography to reveal injustice or protest it. Rather we have sought to establish a different balance between withdrawal and engagement, action in the world and research, fiction and proposal. Our work should neither be interpreted as an attempt to articulate an architectural utopia nor as a political instrument for 'denouncing' or 'mobilizing public opinion'. Our practice is not reactive to dominant forms of power; instead it has a different temporality (*ibid.*).

The fact that the creators of DAAR do not define themselves as activists places them in a different position in relation to the Israeli domination and occupation system. As they say, they do not *react* to the Israeli structures. They *act* in a given context. They intervene in an occupied territory. They get involved into the materiality of the occupied Palestinian landscape. There is no utopia to be followed, there is no *hope*. There is *only* a field (a territory, and area, a landscape, a land) in which they work. The type of interventions performed from DAAR consists of

decolonizing the Israeli architecture of occupation by developing practices based on architecture without any attempt to *solve* the conflict.

This perspective also implies, as the members of DAAR argue, a different temporality. Activism is related to a certain temporality: one based on the urgency to fight the system. The type of work developed from DAAR requires another type of temporality. Decolonization is a slowest activity that cannot be achieved urgently.

The specific position in relation to the Israeli occupation and the specific temporality embodied by the project causes specific effects on the field. Since the objective of DAAR is not to *solve* the conflict, it is not related to the description and definition of specific solutions. However, decolonizing the space implies a transformation. This transformation is not an objective, it is not the place where one has to arrive. Decolonization is an ongoing process. This is why “DAAR architectural proposals are a combination of fiction and reality. Their effects could be the opening of the political imagination” (*ibid.*). The effects of the process of decolonization are not the creation of an alternative *being* (one bi-national state, two states), but the deconstruction of the colonial device so that the spectrum of *the possible* (which implies looking at *other* possible solutions that are not state-based, as Sophia Azeb argues²) becomes wider. Or, following the ideas of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, this process of decolonization implies working on a *sociology of the emergences*.

La sociología de las emergencias consiste en la investigación de las alternativas que caben en el horizonte de las posibilidades concretas. En tanto que la sociología de las ausencias amplía el presente uniendo a lo real existente lo que de él fue sustraído por la razón eurocéntrica dominante, la sociología de las emergencias amplía el presente uniendo a lo real amplio las posibilidades y expectativas futuras que conlleva (Sousa Santos 2010, 25).

Members of DAAR develop decolonization as a practice, which, implies a daily training on imagination.

DAAR's focus on decolonial practice and the fact that there is no attempt to achieve any objective other than decolonial practice itself places this project in the field of *game*. As Julio Monteverde and Julián Lacalle argue in their book *Invitación al tiempo explosivo* (2018), “el juego no pretende significar nada más allá de si mismo” (Monteverde and Lacalle 2018, 10). DAAR's strategy of decolonization is not transcendental but immanent.

2 We will go back to the ideas developed by Sophia Azeb when talking about the Palestinian visual artist Larissa Sansour.

➔ QALANDIYA INTERNATIONAL EVENT

“Qalandiya International (QI) was founded in 2012 as a collaborative contemporary art event that takes place every two years across Palestinian cities and villages” (Qalandiya International 2018). In the program of the 2016 edition of Qalandiya International, entitled “The Sea is Mine” (during which, exhibitions took place in London, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Gaza, Haifa, Ramallah and al-Bireh) the objectives of the project are described as follows:

Qi aims to place Palestine on the world’s cultural map by producing a series of exhibitions, as well as performances, talks, film screenings, workshops and tours, that open up channels for dialogue and exchange, both locally and internationally. As a partnership between art and culture organizations, Qi works collectively to join forces to unify a fragmented geography. Qi 2016, ‘This Sea is Mine’, crosses the borders of Palestine to Amman, Beirut and London, contemplating return and refuge for Palestine and the region (Qalandiya International 2016).

In order to understand the project it is also interesting to look at the reasons why *Qalandiya* was the name chosen for the event.

The name ‘Qalandiya’ is associated with the main checkpoint operated by the Israeli military, disconnecting West Bank cities and communities from Jerusalem and beyond. The setting of daily subjugation and humiliation, it represents the oppressive grip of the occupation. Yet ‘Qalandiya’ has other connotations that have been blurred or erased. It recalls the closed and abandoned Jerusalem airport; it is also the site of the Qalandiya refugee camp, and the village of Qalandiya now divided by the separation wall. A meeting place of contradictions, it is now a place, and symbol, of disconnection, isolation, segregation and fragmentation. Qalandiya International reclaims the name in a defiant and positive celebration of visual arts and culture across a fragmented and divided Palestine and its diaspora” (*ibid.*).

Thus, by reading the different texts produced to describe the project, the relationship between *space* as a symbol and the conceptual development of the event becomes obvious. There is always a memory of space that is translated into words when trying to describe the Qalandiya International event. However, what the creators of the project try to do when using that name is not to perpetuate that memory, but to re-appropriate it. In order the word *Qalandiya* not to be related to the Israeli occupation only, they take it and used it to name an art event. It is an attempt to open the spectrum of possible meanings associated to the word. Again, it is an exercise of imagination. There is no need for erasing the meaning that *Qalandiya* already carries, which is the product of social and historical processes. Instead, re-appropriation consists of both a re-contextualization and a re-imagination of the term.

As it has already been said, the 2016 edition of the event was called “This Sea is Mine”. The edition was an attempt to reflect on the Nakba, on the concept of *return* and on the *sea* as a space that could work as a symbol to think about the relationship of Palestinians with a wider context.

In an attempt to suggest a different point of entry and to dust off the layers of repetitive manifestations of the Nakba and imagined 'Return', Qalandiya International adopts 'This Sea is Mine' as the title of Qi 2016. The Sea, which has inadvertently been omitted from our narrative and the agendas of our politicians, and subsequently been transformed into another component of the siege, or a trap for those fleeing death, could potentially elevate the question of this right from the possibilities of politics to the realm of obviousness. It may be able to position Palestine and the Palestinians in their rightful historic and geographical place and enable us to reclaim our organic ties with the future and the world (*ibid.*).

The reflection on the Nakba and the concept of *return* from an artistic point of view implied looking at how both words have become static symbols and slogans.

The dictionary definition of the Nakba, together with general everyday practices, has fixed the portrayal of the Nakba as the forced displacement of around 750,000 Palestinians in 1948 from their homes and the destruction of hundreds of villages by Zionist paramilitaries as they established the state of Israel. The idea of return, the most 'intuitive' right of Palestinians, and part of the holy trinity of Palestinian dreams and national demands (alongside self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital), has been reduced to a rigid slogan. Today the slogan is static and empty of meaning or connection to our national project, and is only used by politicians for public consumption. More commonly, the Return 'project' has been diminished to merely the symbolic realm of visual culture, most often manifested in shallow and one-dimensional representations of the Nakba, such as the symbol of the key, the UNRWA refugee card and the map. All of these are routinely paraded on national occasions and the Nakba commemorations on the 15th of May of each year, when we witness imagery and political propaganda produced for the occasion that is then swiftly removed the next day (*ibid.*).

This is why, one of the main objectives of the "This Sea is Mine" edition was to "open up the concept of Return and approach it from new and fresh perspectives" (*ibid.*).

The Qalandiya International project works intensively on the re-semiotization and re-activation of words. It is an attempt to focus on the terms used to refer to the Palestinian question. The name of the 2016 edition, "This Sea is Mine" is also an example of how words are used as devices by the organizers of the event. The *sea* turns into a symbol. The sea is an amount of water, a fluid. Does it make sense to own the sea? Does the sea belong to anyone? We know that the sea does belong to someone: it is not a no-man's portion of space. It is part of a territory. It is divided into areas (or volumes?). There are waters inside and outside national jurisdictions (international or trans-boundary waters). Thus, the sea appears both as the appropriable and the unappropriable. The (un)limited, the (un)grabbable.

On the other hand, the sentence *this sea is mine* ironically works as a joke to make fun of the sentence *this land is mine*. Why does it make more sense to say *this land is mine* than *this sea is mine*? There is a shared point of view concerning land as if it was actually possible to own it, whereas it becomes not so clear when talking about the sea, even if both of them (the land and the sea) are part of *space*.

Finally, claiming *the sea to be mine*, and, in this context, claiming the sea to be owned by Palestinians also makes the frustration relating the question of the Nation-State visible. Is the sea the only possible territory for Palestinians? Can the *sea* become their *land*? This idea is related to the artworks *A Space Exodus* and *Nation Estate* created by the visual artist Larissa Sansour that will be analyzed afterwards.

→ KHALED JARRAR

Khaled Jarrar is a multidisciplinary artist (photographer, performer, sculptor) from Jenin, although he is now based in Ramallah. Some of his most famous artworks are intimately (and performatively) related to the Separation Barrier built by Israel in the West Bank. In 2007, he first organized the temporary photo exhibition *At the checkpoint*, which consists of a series of photographs taken by Jarrar in different occupation contexts and borderlands (checkpoints, the wall...). The photos show the daily and violent routine of Palestinians in this type of places and they were indeed exhibited in the same type of contexts where they were taken (at the Qalandia and the Huwvara checkpoints) for a few hours. The pictures were hung from the fences that Palestinians have to face everyday to cross to the *other side*, just in front of the Israeli soldiers that guard the path. Even though Jarrar stresses the role of this exhibition as a documentary piece of art, it does have a performative and political meaning, too. The representation of the checkpoint at the checkpoint emphasizes the real existence of the facts that take place every day in this type of frontier spaces. The act of being at the checkpoint is, then, re-politicized because the reality is placed just in front of its representation, or the other way around. The pictures of Palestinians waiting at the checkpoint are placed just in front of the Palestinians that are at each moment waiting at the checkpoint. Paradoxically, the representation of the checkpoint, namely the pictures, and the choice of placing these pictures at the checkpoint highlights the whole experience of what being at the checkpoint for a Palestinian consists of. This work of art does not merely consist of a series of pictures, then. The chosen place for exhibiting the pictures is an irreplaceable element of the artwork as well.

Some time after, in 2012, Jarrar showed his project *State of Palestine* at the Berlin Biennale. It was the result of a performative process through which Jarrar created an official State of Palestine stamp with the aim of stamping the passports of different people in different cities of the world (Ramallah, Berlin, Paris, Belgrade, Roma, Ghent, Brussels...). The artist asked people to put the stamp on their passports and informed them of the risks this would imply since it is an unauthorized stamp. Indeed, some passports were actually canceled by Israel because of this reason. This

performative action is also related to a ritual that is usual at border environments. The necessity of a visa to travel to certain countries makes the act of stamping passports a frequent procedure that travelers and tourists are used to. Jarrar creates a game in which the normality of a simple act such as stamping a passport becomes political and performative because the stamp that is being put on the passports does not actually exist, at least not officially. However, it does exist as an artwork, even if it is not accepted by the Israeli authorities. Thus, it exists as soon as it is understood as part of a performative and artistic action. This implies Jarrar provides the Palestinian stamp with a certain degree of existence. It exists at some level, even though it is not officially recognized by Israel. With this project, Jarrar also produces an expanded artwork since the performance does not end after Jarrar puts the stamp on a passport. Each person carries his/her stamped passport and interacts with official authorities to whom they have to show their documents. The performance, then, becomes an artistic-performative-political-bureaucratic game of validation. This performance implies a series of questions that happen at the border space: does the state of Palestine actually exist? Where does it exist? When does it exist? Who says it exists/does not exist?

Furthermore, this performance also emphasizes the materiality of a document such as the passport. The passport becomes the physical space for negotiation just in the same way that the ID cards, which are mandatory both for Israelis and Palestinians, become the place where politics happen. Helga Tawil-Souri defines the ID card as a “low-tech, visible, and tactile means of power” (Tawil-Souri 2011, 69) through which occupation, segregation, colonization and control remain possible. The performance designed by Jarrar makes us think about the “institutional materiality of the state apparatus” (*ibid.*, 70) just in the same way that Tawil-Souri does it in her article, and it stresses the role of an identification document such as the passport as a bureaucratic domination tool (*ibid.*, 79).

Finally, Jarrar's performance makes one think about the type of negotiation passports allow, since they, as well as ID cards, are “a mode of 'one-way communication' –keeping in mind that the state apparatus determines their meaning” (*ibid.*, 83). Israel provides these pieces of paper with meaning. The state of Israel is the one that provides certain *papers* with existence whereas other materializations of identity, such as the stamp designed and created by Jarrar, remain nonexistent. This is why Jarrar's project becomes so relevant. The performance allows for a re-appropriation of the space of the passport. It is an example of what Helga Tawil-Souri argues when saying that “the clearest fashion in which alternative, and sometimes antihegemonic, readings are manifested is through forms of art that IDs have inspired” (*ibid.*, 84). In this case, Khaled Jarrar has not been inspired by ID cards but by passports. However, his project also provides an opportunity to use the material(ity) of a document otherwise, in a decolonial way, in front of the Israeli authorities.

In 2013, the Ayyam Gallery organized the *Whole in the wall* exhibition, the first solo exhibition

by Jarrar. The exhibition included the installation of a section of a concrete wall with a hole that allows the spectator to see the other side; a video documenting Jarrar while taking materials from the Israeli Separation Barrier in order to build his artworks; several sculptures made of materials coming from the Separation Barrier; a series of photographs representing what one can see when looking through the small holes of the wall; a video made by Jarrar that shows how a mother and a daughter have to speak and touch each other through a small hole in a section of the wall that separates them; and a video documenting two people playing badminton from both sides of the wall. The exhibition was a mosaic of all the different possibilities of artistic intervention in the wall. One of the most interesting performative proposals made by Jarrar is the one of creating artworks by destroying the wall. Jarrar takes the materials for building artworks directly from the wall and, this way, the act of creation necessarily implies an act of destruction of the frontier structure and vice versa. The artist argues that his source of inspiration for developing this series of objects made of materials coming from the wall is sport and games: balls unite people to play, they are the objects that kids usually lose in the other side of the wall while playing football. Jarrar also re-conceptualizes this idea of the game in the video that shows two people playing badminton from both sides of the wall. Here, Jarrar is not documenting two people that happened to be playing badminton by chance. No: Jarrar creates the performance of playing badminton and he films this performance afterwards. Again, there is a process of highlighting the political meaning of the performance not only by performing it, but also by re-presenting it as a video. This is the same kind of artistic strategy Jarrar developed in his exhibition *At the checkpoint*. It seems as if it was never enough for the artist to just make things once. He has to reduplicate the artistic layers so that his artworks actually become meaningful.

➔ KHALIL RABAH

Khalil Rabah is a Palestinian artist from Jerusalem now based in Ramallah. He has developed his professional career as a an artist in the fields of visual arts, including performance, installation and video art. One of his most famous pieces is the *Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind*. It is an institution-installation created by Khalil Rabah that exists as long as it is exhibited in other spaces (museums, art galleries...). This institution, that does not actually exists (but that, paradoxically, actually does exist), includes different departments (Botany, Geology, Anthropology, Earth and Solar System) and tries to make Palestine visible and relate it to the existence of a past, a history, a knowledge, a memory and a cultural heritage. There is also a permanent collection and different temporary projects that take place in the institution. This way,

with his artwork, Rabah reproduces and performs the normative structure, requirements and protocols that a cultural institution, such as a museum, has to embody in order to exist: all the objects are presented in a certain way, the museum is divided into different sections and it includes permanent and temporary collections... There is a coincidence in the way Khaled Jarrar and Khalil Rabah bring things into existence: Jarrar makes the United States of Palestine stamp become real by creating a stamp that is aesthetically believable (it resembles a real stamp) and by performing the normative and usual action of stamping passports; and Rabah makes the Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind become real by creating an aesthetically believable institution (it resembles a real museum) and by performing the normative conventions of cultural institutions. Thus, they both play the game of existence/non-existence and validation/non-validation. This is a crucial topic when talking about the question of Palestine (its existence/non-existence) and its borders (what are the official borders?). It is also interesting to look at the way the museum created by Rabah is sponsored by a company the existence of which is the result of an artwork made by Rabah, too, entitled the *United States of Palestine Airlines*.

United States of Palestine Airlines is an installation that recreates the office of a non-existent Palestinian airline where one can(not) buy tickets to fly to Palestine. Rose Issa describes the installation in her article for the *Contemporary Practices* (Vol. VI), entitled “Khalil Rabah United States Of Palestine Airlines, London Office (2006)” (2010) when exhibited in London as follows:

“The installation includes a large model plane with the fantasy logo, United States of Palestine Airways composed of letters from other airlines; a map with haphazardly coloured borders; empty display cabinets; five clocks whose hands are frozen at different times; and a sofa with no client to welcome. We had people banging on our door asking for cheap tickets to Palestine or Gaza, or wondering how we dare represent a country that does not exist! (We are not far from the Israeli Embassy in London and many of its staff probably live nearby.) Even children were delighted to see the model plane, as travel agencies in London no longer have them” (Issa 2010, 76).

And she adds “another version of the work, United States of Palestine: Middle East Office was displayed in 2009 in Beirut during the Homeworks cultural forum. This had the added elements of a bus with the USPA [United States of Palestine Airlines] logo to take you to the airport for your non-existent journey” (*ibid.*). It is necessary to highlight the ability of Rabah to create an artistic web of interrelations between his own artworks that makes his whole artistic production become a universe in itself. The (non)existence of his museum is based on the validation that a (non)existent company (United States of Palestinian Airlines) performs. This way, Rabah creates a parallel reality with his own logic, that actually resembles one hundred per cent the logic of the *real world*. Rabah achieves a huge political-artistic-performative lie that allows the spectator/inhabitant of this universe to think about and experience the politics of borderlands in Palestine.

➔ EMILY JACIR

Emily Jacir is a Palestinian artist and filmmaker whose most famous artwork is the performance *Where we come from*. This performance consists of Jacir, who has an US passport, asking Palestinians in exile that are no longer living in Palestine and others that are actually living in Palestine but that cannot move freely a simple question: “If I could do anything for you, anywhere in Palestine, what would it be?”. Once she obtains an answer, she tries to fulfill the task she has been asked to carry out. Thus, the artist tries to do things other Palestinian cannot do because of the constriction of movement imposed by the Israeli occupation. The tasks she has to perform are personal daily ones such as bringing photos of relatives, sending greetings to the family, putting flowers on a mother's grave...:

Go to Haifa and play soccer with the first Palestinian boy you see on the street.

I have never been there, unfortunately, but you bet it will be the first place I go to, if and when, I get my American passport. If I go to Israel, and my passport shows that I have been there, it would limit my ability to visit my family in Lebanon which is a must at the moment.

This was, for example, the wish of Hana, born in Beirut and living in Houston, whose parents were from Haifa. Jacir has created an exhibition to document this performance in which several pictures are accompanied of the tasks each Palestinian was asking the artist to accomplish as well as some personal information to explain the situation of each participant in the performance. The artwork is based on the concept of Poetic Justice, since Jacir achieves to make justice through her artistic practice. Through this performance, she also works on the concepts of presence and absence as well as on the concept of representation. Jacir carries out a series of tasks on behalf of and in representation of absent Palestinians that cannot be *there* (and *there* can be any place that is forbidden for Palestinians because of movement restrictions caused by the Israeli occupation) and, therefore, she allows them to be somehow present, since their tasks are actually fulfilled. Emily Jacir also provides a reflection on the passport as a device for having access to the right of movement. Her passport, indeed, becomes one of the most relevant elements of the performance since it is the object that allows Jacir to carry out all the tasks. In other words, it is because of the type of passport she holds that she can do what she does. This way, Jacir's performance also implies a reflection on the passport as a document that embodies the border itself. It becomes a portable border. The line of the border is not on the ground anymore. Instead, it has been incorporated to the identity of people, who become *bordered bodies*. These bordered bodies are seen as *the others*, they are *othered* simply because of holding the wrong passport and therefore they are deprived of their right to move. As Martina Corgnati argues in her article “Emily Jacir” (2010), this performance, and almost every artwork by Jacir, finally, has to do with the idea of the personal border and the

personal experience of the border. So, again, as it happened in the performance by Jarrar, the passport becomes a symbol-device and it is used to artistically intervene in the border.

➔ LARISSA SANSOUR

Larissa Sansour is a Palestinian visual artist born in Jerusalem and based in London. Here I would like to analyze her artwork *A Space Exodus* (2009), a video on which the artist travels to the Moon and, after having landed, she plants a Palestinian flag on the ground. Sansour recreates the aesthetics of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, the epic of Neil Armstrong's first step on the Moon as well as popularized quotes such as the famous "Houston, we have a problem", which Sansour transforms into "Jerusalem, we have a problem". She also translates the famous quote by Armstrong, "that's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind", into "that's a small step for a Palestinian, one giant leap for mankind" and mixes the soundtrack of Kubrick's film with Middle Eastern melodies. The result is a video based on hybridism, *mélange*, and humor that suggests the Moon as the only possible remaining place for Palestinians to settle. This way, Sansour comically exaggerates the possible consequences of the Israeli occupation in Palestine and she also proposes a reflection on the concept of the Nation-State: Is it actually the Moon the only possible remaining place for Palestinians? The artist caricatures the idea of the perpetual Palestinian exile and displacement. There seems to be no place left for Palestinians on the surface of the Earth, so it becomes necessary for them to settle on the surface of the Moon. This type of artistic reflection on the question of Palestine and space radically differs from the artworks that have just been presented, those of Khaled Jarrar, Khalil Rabah and Emily Jacir. Sansour does not make anything become existent through her artistic practice: she does not create a United States of Palestine Stamp, nor a museum and she does not bring into existence the wishes of Palestinians. However, she also reflects on the dystopian existence of an impossible place for Palestinians. Her message is comic but pessimistic, although in her website she defines her artwork as an optimistic one: the Moon, the only remaining place is the Moon. However, the fictional nature of her artwork also provides an opportunity for changing the hilarious but catastrophic destiny that Sansour predicts for Palestinians. The Moon is the only remaining place for Palestinians if things do not change.

However, as it has already been said, at the same time, Sansour's artwork also implies a reflection on the concept of the Nation-State. Sophia Azeb, in "Palestine made flesh", an article published in *The Funambulist* webpage, refers to the work of Sansour from the perspective of the Non-state solution. She argues that the Palestinian visual artist contributes to the development of new ways of thinking about *solutions* for Palestinians that are not based on the creation of any

state. In *A Space Exodus*, Larissa Sansour chooses the Moon as the future land for Palestinians. This way, by suggesting an impossible solution, she questions the state as the only possible *tool* for liberation. Is it impossible for a nation or a people to be free without the materialization of a state? Sophia Azeb answers this question:

Palestinian refugees continue to exercise their existence by *being* without a (Palestinian) state, even while being subject to the (Israeli) state. Palestinians resist the finality of the loss of a homeland by practicing their existence through the very human material coloured by this loss. In essence, the bodies of Palestinians and their relations in exile act as an *exercise of existence* – bodies unrecognizable and unacknowledged as life forms by their oppressors but unable to be detached from themselves or their own self-knowing (Sophia Azeb n.d.).

Azeb focuses on the Palestinian bodies as the entities that carry the Palestinian identity, the Palestinian nation. From this point of view, Palestine exists because Palestinians exist and their existence is exercised every day. Palestinian bodies are the *space* where the nation crystallizes. This implies both a process of embodiment and a process of displacement: the *land* is not on the *ground* anymore, but the bodies of Palestinians. It does not matter *where* the Palestinian bodies are. What matters is what they *carry* with them, what they are, what they embody. In an interview conducted by Léopold Lambert (2014) Azeb argues that the idea of a nation-state, which is an occidental creation, is inherently violent. It has historically developed as the only possible entity for containing a nation and for making a nation visible and existent in the international arena. The state has become the norm. But, it is possible to think beyond the state, beyond the norm. Nationhood can be practiced without any state. This perspective can be used to analyze Sansour's work, not only *A Space Exodus*, but also other artworks made by her. For example, in *Nation Estate* (2012), Sansour represents in a short video and a series of digital images a hypothetical Palestinian state that takes the shape of a skyscraper (the *state* becomes the *estate*). Palestine has become an architectural structure, a building, which means in this dystopian representation one can go from Jerusalem to Haifa by using the elevator. Both in *A Space Exodus* and *Nation Estate*, the artist makes the state materialize in non-conventional space/structure: the Moon and a building. This way, the obligatory nature of the state as the only possible solution is somehow ridiculed.

What Sansour emphasizes in these two artworks is the lack of political imagination, which makes it increasingly difficult to think about non-normative solutions. However, art may help in this process of making political imagination wider.

By destroying the state as the necessary container of the nation, Sansour also destroys the border as the line that demarcates the perimeter of this state, of the territory and she re-conceptualizes space.

2. RE-APPROPRIATING THE MOROCCAN SEPARATION BARRIER IN WESTERN SAHARA

For the artistic analysis of the artworks and artistic practices that are produced in the borderlands of the Moroccan Separation Barrier in Western Sahara, two art festivals (Fi Sahara Film Festival and ARTifariti –the last one will be analyzed in chapter 5–), one artistic projects (Wall of Sand) as well as seven main artists (Mohamed Moulud Yeslem, Mohamed Hadia Salama, Jadiyah Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahiaand and Warda Belid) are being addressed:

➔ FI SAHARA FILM FESTIVAL AND THE INTERNATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS OF WESTERN SAHARA

FiSahara is a film festival that takes place in the refugee camps of Tindouf. It is organized by CEAS-Sahara, a Spanish solidarity organization working in collaboration with the RASD. In its web-page, the festival is described as follows:

FiSahara es un festival de cine que ofrece entretenimiento y formación al pueblo refugiado saharauí, y que visibiliza un conflicto que lleva cuatro décadas sin resolución desde que Marruecos invadió el Sahara Occidental en 1975. Este proyecto cultural solidario nació en 2003 de un sueño compartido entre la comunidad cineasta española y el pueblo saharauí: llevar el cine hasta uno de los lugares más remotos del mundo, los campamentos de población refugiada que se encuentran en la Hammada, 'el desierto de los desiertos'. En 2011 el FiSahara abrió la escuela de cine Abidin Kaid Saleh, que forma a jóvenes cineastas saharauís en el campamento de Bojador (FiSahara 2018).

The main objectives of the festival are to provide entertainment, education and empowerment tools for Sahrawis and also to make the situation of Western Sahara visible. The organizers of the event do not focus on reflecting or problematizing concepts and practices and the relationship to the territory (something that organizations and events such as DAAR or Qalandiya International do in relation to Palestine). FiSahara is an event that embodies a more paternalistic perspective regarding the field: Western Sahara. The aim of the festival is to *provide* something that is lacking: films and the opportunity to make films, and visibility. The role of the arts as a medium to achieve an enlargement of imagination is not so clear in this case. The arts are used more as tools for humanitarian and social development.

Since 2017 an International Theatre Festival is also been organized at the Sahrawi refugee camps of Tindouf. The festival works as an exchange in which local and international theater groups and collectives share their experiences and perform their plays in front of an audience. In 2018, the festival has celebrated its second edition and the aim is to organize it annually. As it happens with the FiSahara film festival, the objective is not to produce a particular change in the territory, but to

raise awareness internationally of the Sahrawi question.

These two projects are examples that represent how artistic practice has been used normatively in this context with the aim of making the question visible. However, the main goal of this PhD Thesis is not to focus on this type of projects. If I mention them here is only to provide an image of what is usually understood when talking about carrying on artistic project in a bordered region, specifically in Western Sahara.

➔ WALL OF SAND

Wall of Sand is described in its web-page as a nonprofit art project aimed to help Sahrawi people by fundraising. The project is lead by Brahim Buhaia Ali, Dominique Lucien Garaudel, Sara Maine Cheikh, Tim Turiak and Thomas Spallek. The money coming from the donations that people make is used to support other different projects that are being developed in the Sahrawi refugee camps, such as the ARTifariti festival. But, donations are not only meant to work as a support strategy. People who make donations will receive a packet of sand from the wall (each packet costs 10€). A donator can also buy a sand brick to build new structures in the refugee camps. Each brick will be decorated with the name of the donor as a way of showing gratitude (each brick costs 5€). The project Wall of Sand works together with other projects, such as Gritos contra el Muro Marroquí. This collective visits the Separation Barrier once a month to document the situation and they take the sand that will be afterwards sent to donors. The reason why a packet of sand is more expensive than a sand brick is that it requires more work to take the sand from the wall and send it abroad than to create the bricks. Also, the money provided to buy packets of sand is used to financially support activists and their activities.

This artistic initiative resembles the work by Khaled Jarrar, who takes the materials for his artworks from the Israeli Separation Barrier in Palestine. This way, as it has already been said, an act of destruction becomes, indeed, an act of creation. Therefore in the case of the Wall of Sand project, making art mainly consists of a performative process of dismantling the wall, too. However, there are more similarities between the work of Jarrar and the Wall of Sand project. The action of taking sand from the Moroccan Separation Barrier and sending it to donors also resembles another performative action carried out by Jarrar: that one consisting of getting one's passport stamped with the unauthorized United States of Palestinian stamp. In both cases, the performance does not finish in the act of taking the sand and stamping a passport respectively, but long after and much further away. The performance expands in space and time: the packets of sand travel to other countries and the Moroccan Separation Barrier becomes somehow geographically dispersed across the world.

The Wall of Sand project is positioned in the middle of the spectrum of artistic practices

concerning its objective. As it has been already said when talking about the FiSahara film festival and the International Theatre Festival in the previous subsection, artistic projects in Western Sahara are mainly seen as tools for visibility, whereas this PhD Thesis tries to focus on the projects that establish a more performative link to the territory. The Wall of Sand project is placed in the middle of these two poles: it enables visibility by selling sand and bricks to the international community, but it also intervenes in the wall by taking sand, the material used to build the wall. Thus, this project is interesting for the development of this research since it represents the transition from a more representative and symbolic way of making art to a more performative one.

➔ MOHAMED MOULUD YESLEM

If the Wall of Sand's performative action consists of a centrifugal process of taking sand from the Moroccan berm to send it abroad, the project developed by the Sahrawi artist Mohamed Moulud Yeslem is based on the opposite dynamics. His main project is called *Por cada mina una flor* (For every mine a flower). It is an international campaign of support that aims people to provide flowers to finally build up the Jardín de la Paz (the Peace Garden), which consists of a line of flowers that runs in parallel to the Moroccan Separation Barrier. The first flowers were planted on the ground in October 2013. Therefore, the dynamics of this artistic project are not centrifugal, but centripetal, since they imply a process of gathering flowers that come from many different places of the world. Moulud Yeslem's artistic action also differs from the Wall of Sand's project in the fact that the first tries to build something new (a line of flowers that faces the wall), whereas the main focus of the second is to destroy the existing military structure. Both objectives, though, can be seen as complementary actions. In both cases, there is an attempt to raise awareness of the Sahrawi situation and achieve the –also economic– support of the international community. The Wall of Sand's project calls donors to buy packets of sand and Moulud Yeslem calls participants to make flowers that will be afterwards placed in front of the wall.

Again Moulud Yeslem's project is placed in the middle of the spectrum that comes from representation to performance (presentation). The objective is both to raise awareness of the Sahrawi question and to build an artistic installation in front of the Moroccan Separation Barrier. The project also implies a reflection on the materials used to create both a wall and an artwork: if the Moroccan Separation Barrier is built of sand, the artistic installation consisting of a line of handmade flowers is built of paper. These two materials seem to be weak –the sand and the paper could be easily related to fragility–, but both of them produce a robust landscape.

➔ MOHAMED HADIA SALAMA

Muros is a mural by Mohamed Hadia Salama that represents the utopian Sahrawi desire of free movement. It is displayed at the museum of Tifariti, in the Liberated Territories. The artwork is painted directly on one of the walls of the museum. Some of the elements and details of the mural are in relief and it seems as if the artwork was coming up from the wall. The green bodies of three people fly over all the architectural structures that lay down on the ground. Walls, including the walls of the museum themselves, become nonsense structures in a world where bodies can move in all directions, even through the sky. Even though this work of art is a painting and is not an example of a performative action, it has been decided to include it in the analysis of performative ways to re-appropriate walls and frontier structures because of the use of space it implies. The painting both embodies and represents alternative, yet impossible, ways of moving through and being in the Sahrawi landscape. Flying or levitating seems to be the only possible solution to cross the militarized border.

There are some similarities between this type of narrative and the discourse developed by Larissa Sansour in her film *A Space Exodus*. Sansour suggests the Moon as the only possible remaining place for the State of Palestine in the same way Mohamed Hadia Salama suggests flying as the only possible strategy to cross to the other side.

This artwork is an example of how an object can work performatively within a certain space. *Muros* suggests a certain relation to space not only because it provides an image of a certain (and impossible) type of movement to cross a wall, but also because of the way it has been created. The fact that the artwork has been painted on the wall (instead of on a canvas) or the fact that it is in relief implies a certain way of looking at it. This artwork is not only representing an idea, but also producing a space and a dialogue with bodies. As it happens when looking at Larissa Sansour's film, the bodies that perform impossible movements (flying) imply a reflection on the Palestinian and Sahrawi questions: the impossibility of performing any other movement but impossible movements in the Palestinian and Sahrawi territories directly points both to the real restrictions of movement caused by the Israeli and Moroccan occupations and the impossibility of political movement that leads to a lack of solutions.

The performative turn in the artistic practices developed in Western Sahara is also represented by the next project called *Melfas*.

➔ JADIYETO BLAL, FATMA BAHIA, RAFIA EMBAREK, NENA BAHIA AND WARDABELID

Jadiyeto Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia and Warda Belid are the five members of the Sahrawi collective *Luchadoras por nuestros sueños*. They produce handmade *melfas* (which is the piece of clothing that Sahrawi women usually wear) in the Anna Lindh workshop, placed in the wilaya of Bojadour (in the refugee camps of Tindouf, Algeria). As part of the 10th edition of the art festival ARTifariti, that took place in Bojadour between October 29th and November 12th, 2016, these five women produced a series of four *melfas* to be displayed as artworks. The project is explained in the webpage dedicated to the 10th edition of ARTifariti entitled *After the Future*, as follows:

La melfa es el vestido femenino saharauí, una tela ligera de, aproximadamente, 2 por 3 metros que se anuda y sirve para cubrir el cuerpo de las mujeres, proteger del sol, el viento y la arena, del frío en invierno y el calor del verano. No hay dos melfas iguales, cada una tiene un estampado que decora y diferencia.

La melfa, además de funcionar como una piel en el espacio público, tiene una peculiar relación con la arquitectura saharauí. La jaima es la casa tradicional del Sahara Occidental, una construcción de origen nómada realizada únicamente con una sencilla estructura de madera y gruesas telas. Durante el primer periodo de los campamentos de refugiados saharauíes, ante la precaria situación que se vivía, melfas y jaimas se confundían. Las primeras jaimas de los campamentos no eran sino las melfas de las mujeres que, con ayuda de unos palos o un árbol, creaban un pequeño refugio para la familia. Del mismo modo, ante la imposibilidad de conseguir nuevas melfas, en ocasiones se utilizaban las telas de las jaimas como vestidos.

Actualmente, la mayoría de las melfas vienen fabricadas desde el extranjero, especialmente desde China. Solo una pequeña cantidad de las melfas saharauíes se realizan en los campamentos, tiñendo telas que llegan desde Mauritania. En la *dayra* (campamento) de Rabouni hay un pequeño espacio, Taller Anna Lindh, que tiñe estas melfas en unas precarias condiciones salubres y económicas. Estas melfas han sido utilizadas numerosas veces por artistas, saharauíes y extranjeros, para evocar una identidad saharauí, femenina y de resistencia. El artista Federico Guzmán, para su instalación en el *Palacio de Cristal* del Museo Reina Sofía, encargó a la cooperativa de *melfas* una serie de dibujos diseñados por él, que formaban una gran *jaima* en el interior del *Palacio de Cristal*.

Durante la décima edición de ARTifariti, Encuentro de Arte y Derechos Humanos del Sáhara Occidental, propusimos a Jadiyeto Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia y Warda Belid, trabajadoras del taller Anna Lindh, que realizaran una serie de *melfas* para ser expuestas, no como material para que otros artistas las transformaran sino como obras por sí mismas.

Las melfas que realizaron funcionan como retratos y paisajes. Son, en sus palabras, representaciones de la *hamada* (la zona del desierto donde se sitúan los campamentos), el desierto, la tierra saharauí, el cielo, su bandera... representaciones del territorio saharauí. Pero también evocan el cuerpo de las mujeres que las han realizado, el cuerpo que se proyecta a través de sus tintes y que las melfas pueden cubrir.

Esta tensión entre el cuerpo individual y el espacio que le circunda refleja la tensión que construye la *melfa* como piel: cubre cuerpos femeninos, pero también evoca la arquitectura del refugio, el hogar, el espacio social. Las obras de Fatma Bahia, Jadiyeto Blal, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia y Warda Belid, instaladas en

el espacio lejos de sus muros, creando lugares que atravesar, hablan del espacio limítrofe entre el individuo, el homo sacer de Giorgio Ágamben, y el espacio social, colectivo, la ciudad o (siguiendo a Ágamben), el tropos del campo de refugiados como paradigma del espacio social contemporáneo.

Estas melfas fueron expuestas en el Museo de la Resistencia, aparato institucional del gobierno saharaui para narrar la historia del pueblo saharaui. Fue la primera exposición de arte contemporáneo que se realizaba en el museo y la primera vez que se mostraba un elemento "femenino" en un espacio que, hasta hace pocos años, se conocía como Museo de la Guerra (After the Future 2017)³.

The series of *melfas* were first exhibited at the National Museum of Resistance, in Rabouni, a space managed by the Ministry of Defense in order to preserve historical memory; and, after that, they were also displayed at MACSUR, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo del Sur (MACSUR), in Lanús, Argentina from August 25th to November 5th, 2017, as part of the exhibition entitled *Melfas. Línea Orgánica* curated by José Iglesias García-Arenal and Olga Correa. Analyzing the differences in the ways that this series of melfas worked in the two different contexts (the National Museum of Resistance and MACSUR) is interesting in order to understand the relationship between the artworks and space. However, before delving into this analysis, I provide the answers to some questions that were asked to José Iglesias García-Arenal, the curator of the exhibition *Melfas. Línea Orgánica* with the aim of understanding the project in detail and its relationship to the Sahrawi territory:

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
What is the relationship between the body, the arts and the territory in the series of melfas made by Jادیeto Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia and Warda Belid?	<p>Jادیeto Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia and Warda Belid have been making melfas for some years. The melfas are regular female dress in Western Sahara, sometimes presented as the "traditional" female dress (when actually, it started around 20 years ago, as a characteristic element of the sedentary life in the refugee camps). They used the making of melfas as an economic support for their precarious situation in the camps (a precarious intersection as Sahrawis, women, young people born as refugees, and as, some of them, black people). At the same time they were trying to make and sell the melfas, they used the factory as a place to develop a collective subjectivity, understanding the melfas as canvas to represent a mix of portrait and landscape. Their visual language uses abstract motives inspired in part in the traditional Sahrawi ornamentation and in the regular melfas market (which are produced in China or India and have varied Western designs).</p> <p>The melfas always project a body, they are practical objects that refer to the female body, and particularly a female refugee body (or occupied body, if we refer to the Sahrawis in the occupied territory). This reference is reinforced when the artists use the melfas to project themselves, but this projection is, overall in the last melfas, shared with a representation to the Sahrawi territory. This territory is a physical and abstract space, and sometimes crossed by different timelines (in some melfas there is a representation of the past, present and future of Western Sahara).</p> <p>In the first exhibition we did together (in the Museo de la Resistencia, 2016), we tried to understand the melfas as a representation of a space where the territory and the individual/collective bodies cannot be pulled apart, but only be understood as a symbiotic relationship clearly influenced by the nomadic Sahrawi history.</p> <p>In the last exhibition, the one at MACSUR, the melfas were installed as walls (We wanted to reference the traditional female architecture space of the haima). That was a</p>

3 <http://www.afterthefuture.care/artifariti-2016-un-mapa-2.html>

“harder” display, the melfas as walls projected the absences of the bodies in a much stronger way. A wall might be the representation of a missing body.

But, from the beginning, (when they were using the melfas to make money or when they collaborated with Federico Guzmán in his installation for the Palacio de Cristal, Reina Sofia, 2015) the melfas were an artistic language and a commodity sold as a “luxury” dress or as souvenir. There is no need for separation in an extremely precarious economy; here the aesthetic expression needs to occupy fringes and cracks, there is not an autonomous space for art.

What is the relationship between gender and the production of space in Western Sahara (including the refugee camps of Tindouf)?

It is a very difficult question. Before travelling to Argentina for the installation of *Melfas* [Línea orgánica], I had an interview with Rocio Medina (author of *Mujeres saharauis. Tres tuizas para la memoria de la resistencia*, http://www.eldiario.es/andalucia/lacajaneagra/memoria-historica-Sahara-mirada-feminista_0_527747620.html) and I asked the same question, because it looks as a very clear point: there is a direct connection between fabrics produced by women and the composition of the traditional nomadic houses. Also, the building of the refugee camps after 1975 was organised by women (while men were in the front line fighting against Morocco) and they controlled everything till 1991 (after the ceasefire), from house organisation to education or the distribution of humanitarian aid in the camps. The Sahrawi house is a space supposedly organised by women but there are too many contradictions and other issues that affect this tension.

There is a permanent praise to Sahrawi women and some people talk about matriarchy, but this is not serious, it is a very superficial gaze, which does not analyse the strong patriarchal order of Frente Polisario.

Anyway we can say there is a particular construction of sensual spaces in the Sahrawi refugee camps, heir of their nomadic life. These spaces use melfas, fabrics, cushions, carpets, strong colours and fluffy textures, and they used to be made by Sahrawi women. I do not think the “hedonism” of these interior is trivial, but it is part of the daily resistance to the occupation and the strong condition of the camps. As in many other places, the reproduction (and here, resistance) of life is supported by women.

Is the idea of the border somehow present in this series of melfas?

This is complex. I do not know if the artists would say there is a reference to border in their work. In the exhibition *Melfas. Línea orgánica*, I, as a curator, projected one, but that was a particular interpretation.

I tried to see the melfas as an aesthetic form which refers to the tension between body and territory, private and public space. In our Western tradition this separation is very clear, but in the camps it is more complex, there is not exactly a public and private sphere, neither their idea of individuality is the same one that we have. The exhibition focused in a border which is strongly visible in the evolution of a neoliberal world, a separation between common spaces and solitude bodies. We display the melfas because I believe Sahrawis have a lot to teach us, we can learn a lot of things from their experience which can be fundamental for a global resistance. So we were projecting this idea of the border against the melfas trying to see what they “reflect”.

The melfas are not related to a particular knowledge, we have to recall Caro Baroja to find really interesting ideas about the haimas and Sahrawi architecture, but I insist that there is a particular experience as refugees, and the melfas are a symbol of this experience. Also, the border in the melfas is visible because of the display we used (as walls in the middle of the space, similar to the use of the melfas in Federico Guzmán’s haima). But, did the melfas as aesthetic forms exist without a display in a contemporary art context? I think the artists understood very well, even before all of us, that their work has to survive in an ambiguous place between contemporary art display spaces and a reference to traditional manners, which sometimes look as pure fiction (again, the discussion about melfas as “traditional” dresses) Is this a border too? Maybe, instead of a border, the melfas refer to a space in-between, not a border as a line to cross, but a space where you can stay (Walter Mignolo, “habitar la frontera, no cruzarla”).

Another point is the relationship between the *melfa* and the skin. In the exhibition *Melfas*, one of the last works was the video that documents the performance *Carrying*, by Pepe Espaliu. In the video, Espaliu is carried by his friends as a sick body through the downtown of San Sebastián. He is barefoot and his feet never touch the floor. There is a huge tension in that image. The *melfas* are a separation between the individual female body and what we could understand as “public space” in Western Sahara. A separation, but, at the same time, a Sahrawi woman needs a *melfa* to have a voice in Western Sahara culture, not only because a patriarchal structure, which forces women to wear particular clothes, but because *melfas* have become a symbol of Sahrawi resistance in a fight to claim for a Sahrawi identity. The collective Desmaquillando Tabues have done interesting things around the contradictions under the claim of “traditional” elements and the evolution of Sahrawi young generations in a global world.

As a conclusion of the words stated by Iglesias Garcia-Arenal, the series of *melfas* produced by Jadiyah Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia and Warda Belid do not directly relate to the idea of the border. There is a symbolic border, a line that separates the public from the private that is problematized by the *melfa* itself, since it has become both a piece of clothing and an architectural element in the Sahrawi refugee camps. Thus, it relates both to the body and architecture, to the expression of the body, and the development of an identity, and to the expression of space, and the development of a socio-spatial structure. However, as it is explained in the publication that followed the exhibition *Melfas. Línea Orgánica*:

Las artistas hacen una interpretación muy definida de cada una de las piezas: la representación de diferentes territorios se superpone a las *melfas* como autorretrato colectivo y como representación de cuerpos desaparecidos. Cada *melfa* lleva una referencia a un lugar: la *hamada*, la *badia*, el cielo del desierto, la tierra manchada de sangre del Sáhara Occidental ocupado (MACSUR 2017, 19).

Thus, each *melfa* represents a portion of space: the *hamada*, the *badia*, the sky of the desert, the occupied territories, etc. The *melfa*, then, becomes a bridge that connects bodies to territories. The *melfa* is a piece of clothing, an architectural element and a canvas for the representation of different Sahrawi landscapes. Displaying four *melfas* in a museum implied the existence of an absent body (the one that is not wearing the *melfa* that is being displayed) and an absent territory as well (the one that is represented by each *melfa*). It seems impossible to have both, the body and the territory, together at the same time. This is exactly what occupation provokes: the impossibility of simultaneity. There is no *body and territory*, but *body or territory*. And, the territory and the body, in this specific case, are separated by a border. When Jose Iglesias García-Arenal says that in the exhibition at MACSUR, they decided to display the *melfas* as walls to represent a missing body, the relationship between the border, the territory and the body arises. The border (the wall) embodies a piece of clothing (the *melfa*)⁴ representing the Sahrawi territory that is supposed to be worn by a body that is actually absent.

4 Or is it the *melfa* which embodies the wall?

However, as it has already been mentioned, displaying the *melfas* at the National Museum of Resistance in Western Sahara is not the same as displaying them at a contemporary art museum such as MACSUR, in Argentina. This is because, museums are not neutral spaces (MACSUR 2017, 21). Museums are “espacios para la creación de narrativas y sujetos políticos” (*ibid.*). Thus, placing the *melfas* at the National Museum of Resistance implied a rupture with the military narratives related to the Sahrawi national and historical memory:

Integrar las *melfas* dentro de este espacio supuso una ruptura en la representación nacional: el discurso de resistencia está fuertemente sujeto por una visión militarizada y masculina de la lucha anticolonial, donde el trabajo feminizado de los cuidados y mantenimiento de la vida cotidiana, a pesar de ser reconocido, se relega a un segundo plano (*ibid.*,19).

On the other hand, displaying the *melfas* at MACSUR, implied looking at them mainly as artworks instead of looking at them as national symbols. The series of *melfas* meant something different depending on the place where they were being exhibited, and also because of the relationships developed with other objects/artworks displayed around them. There are obvious differences in the way one *reads* the *melfas* when they are surrounded by official documents, weapons and war pictures and when they are surrounded by other artworks. Re-contextualization is a process that makes it possible for the *melfas* to work as devices that can be activated in many different ways.

Finally, this series of four *melfas* have to be placed in their neoliberal socioeconomic context. Although *melfas* are sometimes seen as traditional objects, their history is rather short and it is linked to the global markets:

En este entresijo de cuerpo, tejido, forma plástica y arquitectura es donde también se sitúan las *melfas*, para las cuales tenemos que incluir una nueva variable: sus condiciones de producción y los entramados económicos globales que tienen detrás. La *melfa*, en tanto que signo de lo saharauí y reivindicación de una autonomía, se lee habitualmente como una referencia a la vida bereber de un pasado primigenio, y se olvida su verdadero origen, que tenemos que situar hace solo un par de décadas, cuando el mercado de tejidos internacionales (la mayoría importados desde India y China) llega a los campamentos. Estos vestidos están hechos de tejidos muy ligeros, que pueden proteger del viento y la arena, pero no resisten las condiciones de una vida nómada. Una visita rápida a una tienda en los campamentos permite ver cómo se cruzan tejidos de origen europeo, americano o asiático con las maquiladoras de México, los talleres textiles de Argentina o las fábricas de tejidos de China. Las *melfas* dejan ya de ser una referencia a un ser saharauí atemporal, sino que pasan a ser una imagen de las economías neoliberales barrocas que giran alrededor de todo el globo, el sistema que sustenta la ocupación ilegal de Sáhara Occidental (MACSUR 2017, 22-28).

In this context characterized by international transactions and precarious labor, “el paso de trabajadoras precarias para una ONG a colectivo autogestionado no es banal” (*ibid.*, 39). When Jadiyah Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia and Warda Belid started producing *melfas*, they were working for an NGO. Afterwards, they decided to change their status and stop

living as precarious workers. They decided to create a self-managed and autonomous collective that they called *Luchadoras por nuestros sueños*. Thus, the project does not only enable a dialogue between the artistic practice and space, but also between artistic practice and the socioeconomic context.

The *melfa* as an artwork works differently in the different contexts where it is placed. It becomes an interface that makes it possible for intersectionality to become visible and even tangible. The *melfa* becomes the opposite of the border. As Gloria E. Anzaldúa would argue, it becomes the crossroad, the place where references to many different entities meet: references to the body, to the territory, to identity, to landscape, to architecture, to the global market, etc. Or, as Iglesias García-Arenal argues, by quoting the words said by Mignolo, the *melfa* appears as the border that one can inhabit. It is not a line, but an area where many people live.

3. TOWARDS PRACTICE

In this chapter I have analyzed several projects, artworks, and art events related to the walls of Palestine and Western Sahara. The next chapter will focus on the artistic practice I have developed as a strategy both to:

- Reflect on the border from the artistic field.
- Develop fieldwork in collaboration with local artists in Palestine and Western Sahara.

CHAPTER 5: ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS FIELDWORK

” أعطني الناي وغني ”

Gibran Khalil Gibran and Fairuz¹

This chapter analyzes the question of the border in general and the borders in Palestine and Western Sahara specifically through artistic practice. It is by doing art that knowledge about borders has been produced. This point of view regarding the production of knowledge is an attempt to make the arts become a valid qualitative methodological tool for research, even in the social sciences and humanities, as it has already been argued in the introduction to this PhD Thesis. It is also an attempt to look at three artistic processes as fieldwork based on observed participation. The chapter develops a description of different projects in which I got involved and it addresses the knowledge that arose from artistic practice in each case. The goal is to delve into the description of artistic participation in order not to approach art only from observation –as I did in the previous chapter– but also from experience.

I try to approach artistic practice from an epistemological point of view despite the scientific skepticism it may cause in certain contexts. And I do it because it is a debate that needs to be further developed. The epistemological dimension of the arts has been an historical question that is deeply analyzed in *Epistemología de las artes: la transformación del proceso artístico en el mundo contemporáneo* (2013), for example. The book includes several chapters –each of them written by a different author– that analyze the role of the arts in the process of producing knowledge. The introduction to the book, written by Daniel Jorge Sánchez and entitled “La dimensión epistémica del proceso artístico”, elaborates the epistemological role of the arts in the contemporary context: “El proceso de globalización, la transformación tecnológica general, y de los medios de comunicación humanos en particular, experimentados en los finales del siglo XX, obligan a replanteos epistemológicos referidos a los alcances del concepto artístico y a las características y particularidades del término 'estético’”(Jorge Sánchez 2013, 6). He also argues that:

Frente a los nuevos posicionamientos filosóficos y paradigmas científicos [...], los nuevos dispositivos y circuitos de las producciones vinculadas con lo estético y artístico fueron construyendo teorías que han alterado y enriquecido tanto la categorización del concepto 'arte' como sus diversas cualidades. Entre ellas la gnoseológica y epistemológica (*ibid.*, 8).

The author only focuses on the western context when talking about the epistemological role of artistic practice. However, the question is still valid for other contexts. Artistic practice is not only a

¹ From the poem by Gibran Khalil Gibran "المواكب", that was afterwards adapted by the singer Fairuz.

representation of the world, but also a production of the world, an epistemological methodology and a specific type of knowledge. Or, as artist Sandra García González once said while in a workshop on gender and performativity entitled “Taller performativo en torno a la cuestión de género (II)” (Universidad Complutense de Madrid; April 25th, 2019), artistic research means “mover los pensamientos”: moving thoughts while doing artistic practice.

Here, the point of departure is considering artistic practice as a place where one can produce knowledge about the relationship between the arts and the border.

1. MOVLAB 2017

MovLab is a workshop in which I participated between November 2016 and May 2017 (Madrid, Spain). The main goal in participating in such a workshop was to research different possibilities regarding movement, dance and performativity. Different choreographers and dance makers were invited to the different sessions that took place once a month and they provided an opportunity to delve into different types of languages, ways of doing and practices. The last session of the 2016/2017 edition of MovLab, nevertheless, was designed by participants and we were invited to develop our own proposals. I decided to work on the topic of borders. The practice lasted one hour and a half and it consisted of three main parts:

- **A discussion group.** The discussion group –better known in English as *focus group*– is a qualitative methodological tool that comes from the social sciences. I took the structure of the discussion group as a starting point so that the dancers could progressively get into the topic of borders. I provided them with a specific topic, *frontier architecture*, and they spent fifteen minutes discussing the question of the architectural structure of borders while being recorded. The transcription of the dialogue is not provided because the act of recording was merely a gesture performed with the aim of producing a *scientific environment* that allowed dancers to address the topic from an in-between perspective that was both academic and artistic.
- **Transition to movement.** Once dancers had spent almost fifteen minutes talking about the topic, I said the word *transition*, which was an instruction that we had previously and collectively agreed. It meant dancers should move from the verbal discussion to a corporal discussion little by little. The topic remained the same, *frontier architecture*. During this second part, I sometimes conducted the corporal discussion –and conditioned the process– by saying certain words such as *choreography of borders* or *soundscape of borders* in order to remind the dancers of the topic so that they could remain focused. This part lasted for (approximately) fifteen or twenty minutes as well

- **Cartography of itineraries.** Finally, I provided dancers with a piece of paper to draw their itineraries. They could represent the spaces that they had crossed and inhabited during the corporal practice. After having drawn their trajectories, they explained their drawings to the rest of the group. This part was an activity that was proposed in order to provide dancers with a space for reflection on what they had been doing.

During the practice of moving and performing the border, one of the dancers (Raquel Sánchez) took a table and a chair. She placed the chair on top of the table and sat on it as if she was a chair umpire in a tennis match, placing her body between the two halves of a figurative tennis court, where the net that divides the space (and which symbolically represented the border) is placed. She developed the movements that are expected from a chair umpire, looking at both sides of a fictional tennis court and following a nonexistent ball with her eyes. She also reproduced the style used by tennis commentators to announce that a player has won a point: *fifteen-love, thirty-love*... It was interesting to look at the similarities between this spontaneous way of representing the border and the video recorded by the Palestinian artist Khaled Jarrar in which he plays badminton with a friend. In the video by Jarrar, the badminton court is divided by the Israeli wall. There is no net, but a wall. Each player has to look up to the sky in order to see the ball coming from the other side. The dancer Raquel Sánchez and the visual artist Khaled Jarrar came to the same artistic conclusion: they both agreed in the way of representing the border despite the many differences in the way they experience it in their daily life. The existence of these artistic similarities also implies a transformative and performative role of sports. The tennis/badminton court is a space with such a structure that it allows for the development of a reflection on the border. However, the practice of a sport such as tennis or badminton also implies a way of moving one's body and moving objects that has something to do with the border as well: the ball that is constantly being repelled from each half of the court, the movement of two or four bodies (the players) that make a physical effort to hit the ball with a racket, the image of the ball caught in the net... Sports imply movement and, most of the times, pleasure. This is one of the reasons that explains why they can play such an important role in the process of decolonizing and re-appropriating border structures. In order to develop this argument, I provide a small approach to the practice of rock climbing in Palestine, a case study that I studied two years ago, and that can work as an example that illustrates the question of the impact of sports in a borderscape. I take the rock climbing as a paradigmatic example to explain how a physical activity produce an impact on one of the dimensions of the border: verticality.

Palestine has become a walled space where violence is embodied by architecture. As it has already been said in previous chapters, several authors such as Eyal Weizman, Léopold Lambert or Alessandro Petti have researched thoroughly the role that architecture plays in the Israeli strategy of occupation. Analyzing the role played by the sports, and more specifically, by rock climbing in a

context such as the West Bank may help in the process of understanding the everyday strategies developed by civilians to re-appropriate frontier architectural structures. The sports also have something in common with the arts: they are performances, they are closely linked with the doing, and that is why they are addressed (even if it is only in a concise way) in this PhD Thesis. In the article “Climbing Walls to feel at Home: Palestinian Climbers reappropriating Space” (2017), I specifically focused on analyzing synthetically the impact of the Palestinian climbing community on the process of decolonizing the landscape produced by the Israeli occupation. However, it is also interesting to look at rock climbing as a strategy for the re-conceptualization of verticality. Climbing, as an activity that is performed in the vertical plane, can produce a new relationship between the body and vertical border structures: walls, berms, fences, vigilance towers, outposts on hilltops...

Palestine is a borderland, as Gloria E. Anzaldúa would call it. This implies that the existence of Palestine does not only happen on its land (meaning its ground), but also on/in/through its walls. It is a commonly shared behavior to perceive or to think about the land or even the territory as a series of horizontal pictures. We have been taught to look at space through the lens of panoramic landscape, determined as we are by the line of the horizon. But, verticality also takes part in the configuration of landscape, even though one would only become aware of it when verticality materializes in the existence of an obstacle such as a building, a mountain or a wall. Of course, borders are not only made of vertical structures. Trenches, for example, have traditionally been part of border areas. However, the main aim of this reflection is to focus on verticality as a dimension of space that has been used and monopolized by Israel to perform violence but that can also become an inhabitable terrain, a place to be re-appropriated by Palestinians. Decolonizing the border areas imposed by Israel in the Palestinian context, then, could also consist of a process called a *deviolentization of verticality*. As Petti, Hilal and Weizman have argued in their book *Architecture after Revolution* (2013), decolonizing any piece of occupation architecture in Palestine cannot consist of a process of keep on doing the same. This means, a building is not decolonized only because it is not inhabited by the colonizer anymore. An architectural structure needs to be used differently in order to be decolonized. That is the reason why verticality has to be performed otherwise.

The Palestinian climbing community has experienced a great rise since the foundation of Wadi Climbing, a company created by Tim Bruns and Will Harris in 2014. The company is based in Ramallah and organizes climbing trips, courses and activities both outdoors (there are five main locations where several routes have been equipped with bolts for the practice of sport climbing) and indoors (in the recently built boulder gym). The climbing community has been developing ever since and local climbers now go out together to the rocky walls regularly. This necessarily has an

impact on the way vertical surfaces are seen.

Indeed, climbing produces a change in the way verticality is perceived. Bodies do not perceive the wall (in this case, a natural limestone rock wall) as an obstacle anymore, but as a surface where different climbing routes have been drawn with the aim of being followed, inhabited, transited. Thus, the first main change climbing produces in the way verticality is conceived has to do with its relation to movement allowance: occupation implies a verticality of obstruction whereas climbing implies a verticality of transit.

The second main change on verticality has to do with the purpose that each of these activities (occupation and climbing) pursue. Occupiers' objective relating verticality is the production of violence (sometimes camouflaged behind the word *security*) whereas climbers' objective relating verticality is the production of pleasure and enjoyment.

Finally, the third main change is related to identity. Different authors such as Shelley Egoz² have articulated a discourse on the relationship between identity and landscape. The feeling of belonging to a given portion of earth (including the communities that inhabit them) is indispensable for the development of a sense of self. Therefore, destroying a given landscape implies destroying the identities of those communities that have been living there for centuries. Climbing allows Palestinian climbers to attach their bodies to the landscape in a new way again, despite the occupation environment. This makes it possible for Palestinians to strengthen their feeling of remaining *locals*.

Eric de Léséleuc wrote an article entitled “Rock climbing and territory: symbolic processes in the appropriation of a public space” (2004), that focuses on the ability of an activity such as climbing to generate a community that ends up defining its own territory and identity. The author refers to the climbing community of Claret (France) as his main case study and describes how this process of *territorialization* can also imply a counter-productive process of segregation due to the avoiding of those people that are not recognized as members of the community. However, in an occupied area such as the West Bank, this process of *territorialization* allowed by climbing activities can be read in a slightly different way: climbing here is inclusive since it allows locals to inhabit their landscape. Climbing also allows people to develop new affective ties to the land not necessarily by consciously performing an exercise of resistance and/or memory. This does not mean that resistance and memory are irrelevant or somehow old-fashioned. This only means certain activities such as climbing can open up the spectrum of what is considered a liberation strategy in the Palestinian context.

In conclusion, the practice of climbing activities in Palestine can have an impact on what

2 Egoz, Shelley. 2013. “Landscape and identity: beyond a geography of one place.” In *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies*, edited by Peter Howard, Ian Thompson and Emma Waterton, 272-286. New York: Routledge.

verticality means and causes. It is also an opportunity to re-appropriate and decolonize the space that has been imposed (the wall) or occupied (the West Bank) by Israel. Finally, it allows for the rise of new communities and new strategies to attach oneself to the Palestinian landscape and identity.

This is what a sport such as rock climbing may produce. However, each sport implies a certain way of moving and relating to space that may be able to create new strategies to re-appropriate the borderscape.

In the case of tennis or badminton, which are the sports performed both by Khaled Jarrar and Raquel Sánchez to inhabit the border, verticality is also there: the net is the permanent obstacle and everything else depends on it: the players, the referee, the ball, the rules of the game... Khaled Jarrar re-appropriates an object that can work as the net in order to play, whereas Raquel Sánchez recreates a tennis match to represent the border. In both cases, the net is the main element. Verticality is the dimension to be re-appropriated.



MovLab 2017. Picture by Olga Blázquez.

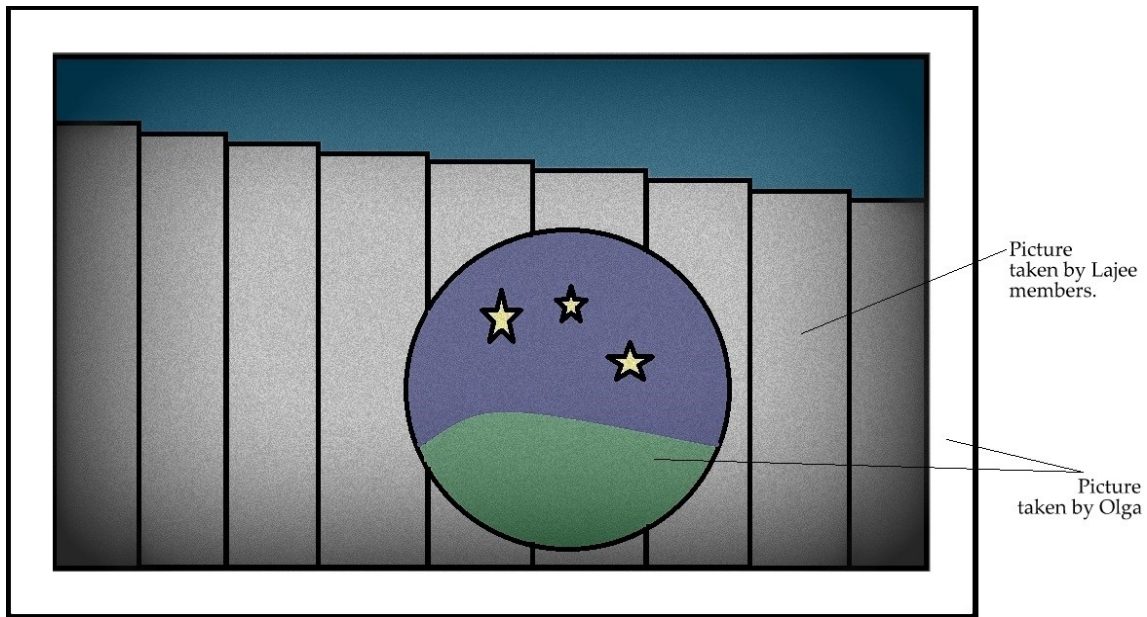


MovLab 2017. Picture by Olga Blázquez.

2. PALESTINE: ARTIVISM ON ARCHITECTURE

In order to reflect on the border in Palestine, I asked members of the Lajee Center for artistic collaboration. Lajee Center is a “community-based grassroots creative cultural centre that works with new generations of Palestinians as they continue their ongoing struggle for justice and rights for Palestine and all Palestinians” (Lajee 2018). They are based in the Aida refugee camp and their objective is “to provide refugee youth with cultural, educational, social and developmental opportunities”(ibid.). When I contacted them, I also suggested a proposal for the artistic collaboration, which consisted of a photography project in relation to architecture. The development of the project implied taking pictures of border structures in Palestine, printing them, and making a hole on each picture. Then, I would bring the images to other contexts and take pictures of what can be seen through the holes (landscapes, parks, other borders, etc). The main idea was to re-contextualize the picture of the wall, bringing it into different spaces and looking at other landscapes through the holes on the pictures. I asked Lajee members for collaboration, since it made no sense to do it alone. They have the experience of being living there and I did not want to appropriate their discourse but to become a mate. They agreed to collaborate and we started the project.

This is the schema that I created to explain the project.



And this was the first outline we (members of the Lajee center and me) did together:



The decision not to travel to Palestine in order to develop this project was deliberate –when I visited Palestine, I developed other type of researching work–. I wanted to develop a distance project. This project implied a specific type of fieldwork based on the absence of the researcher on the field itself. The presence of the body that represents the Academia can be somehow disruptive, and I also wanted to analyze the differences between *being there* (as it happened when I went to the Sahrawi refugee camps) and *not being there* (as it happened in this case).

Finally, the project developed in three different ways. Here I provide the result of the creative processes, which is followed by an explanation of the three series of pictures that arose from the artistic collaboration.

The first and the second series of pictures consisted of a graphic narrative (or storytelling). The main idea was to produce an estrangement effect and to work on the relationship between a

representation of the Israeli wall in Palestine (the pictures provided by members of the Lajee center) and the architecture of the fences of the CIE of Aluche and one school in Madrid. The first series of pictures shows one person making a hole on the representation of the Israeli wall. The person uses the pierced picture as a stencil template to draw a circle on the surface of the fence of the CIE. The story ends abruptly and the spectator does not know whether the hole on the fence is actually going to be made or not. Thus, this series of pictures ends with a question.

Technically, the series of pictures produce a transition in the artistic language: we travel from photography to architecture. From a hole on a picture, to a hole on a fence. This way, I tried to work on the illusion of the possibility of making a hole on a fence by simply using a box cutter, the same box cutter that was used to make a hole on a picture. Irony and sarcasm is somehow present. Humor is also present when looking at the scale of the hole that is being made on the fence. The hole seems to be big on the surface of the picture representing the Israeli wall, but it becomes ridiculously small in comparison with the enormous size of the CIE building. Finally, when analyzing this series of pictures one can also wonder why to make a small hole on a fence. The fence is not a wall. It is not a solid, dense structure. In other words, a fence already contains *holes* in its structure. The difference between these two types of holes is related to their objective: the holes *of* the fence and the holes *on* the fence are different, since the first ones are an inherent part of the structure of the fence, whereas the second ones are related to a strategy of resistance. The holes *of* the fence produce the fence, whereas the holes *on* the fence destroy it.

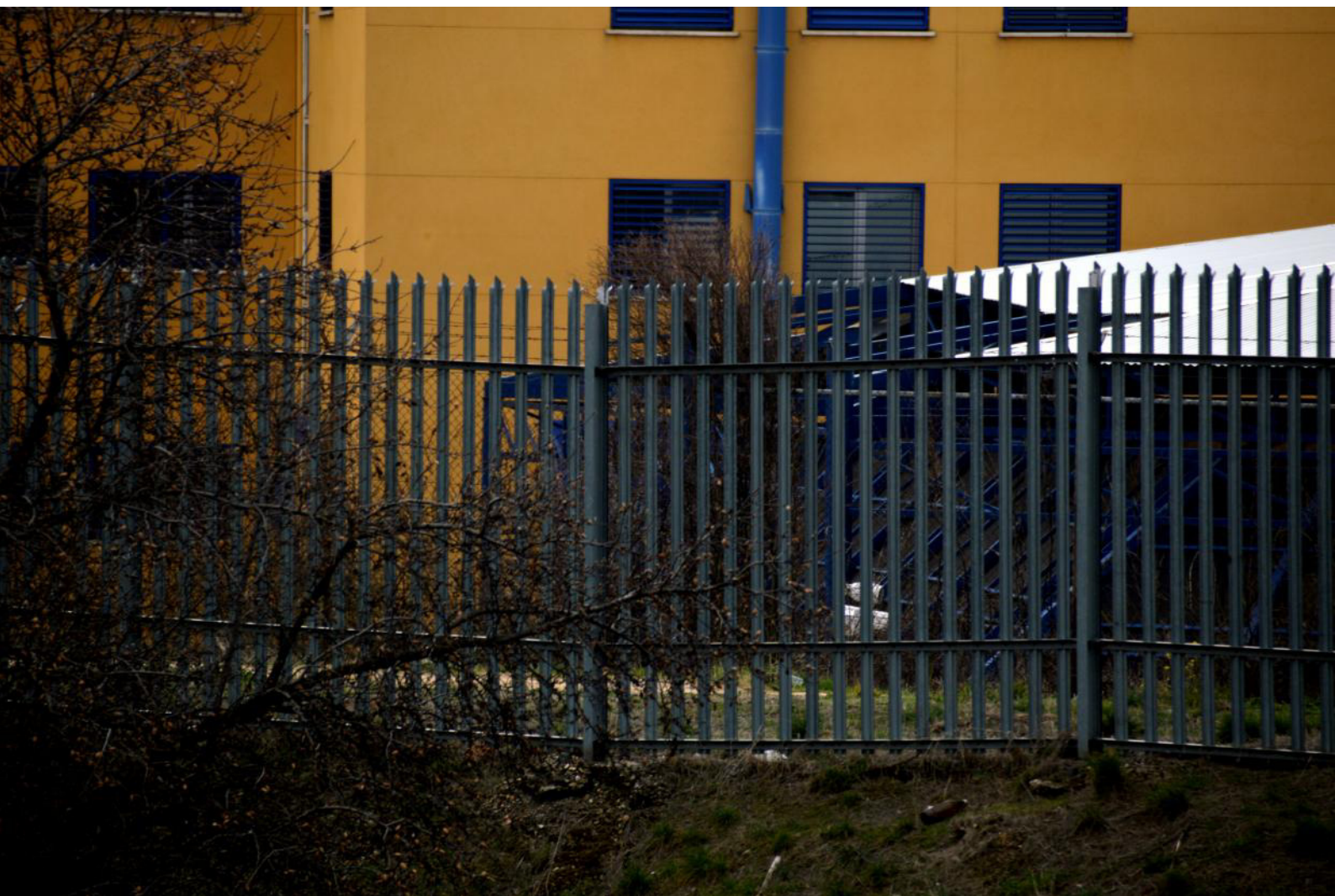
The second series of pictures shows a person building a spyglass by using a picture of the Israeli wall. The person looks through the spyglass and sees the fence of the Montserrat school, in Madrid (Spain). This series of pictures is aimed to produce the illusion of looking a frontier structure through another frontier structure. It is a reflection on *distance*. There is no way to escape the wall. It is everywhere. It does not end. From Palestine one can even see the walls and fences built in other places, all over the world, even in schools.

These two artworks reflect on the ability of the arts to produce unreal, yet transformative, situations on borderlands. In these three cases, the relationship between photography and architecture provides the spectator with the rules of a game relating to perception: What if it was actually possible to make a hole on a wall by using a box cutter? What if one can become aware of all the border structures simply by looking through the wall? The wall is here re-appropriated as a material to reflect on the wall itself.

Aida refugee camp, Palestine

Immigrant Detention Centre (Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros, CIE), Aluche, Madrid, Spain





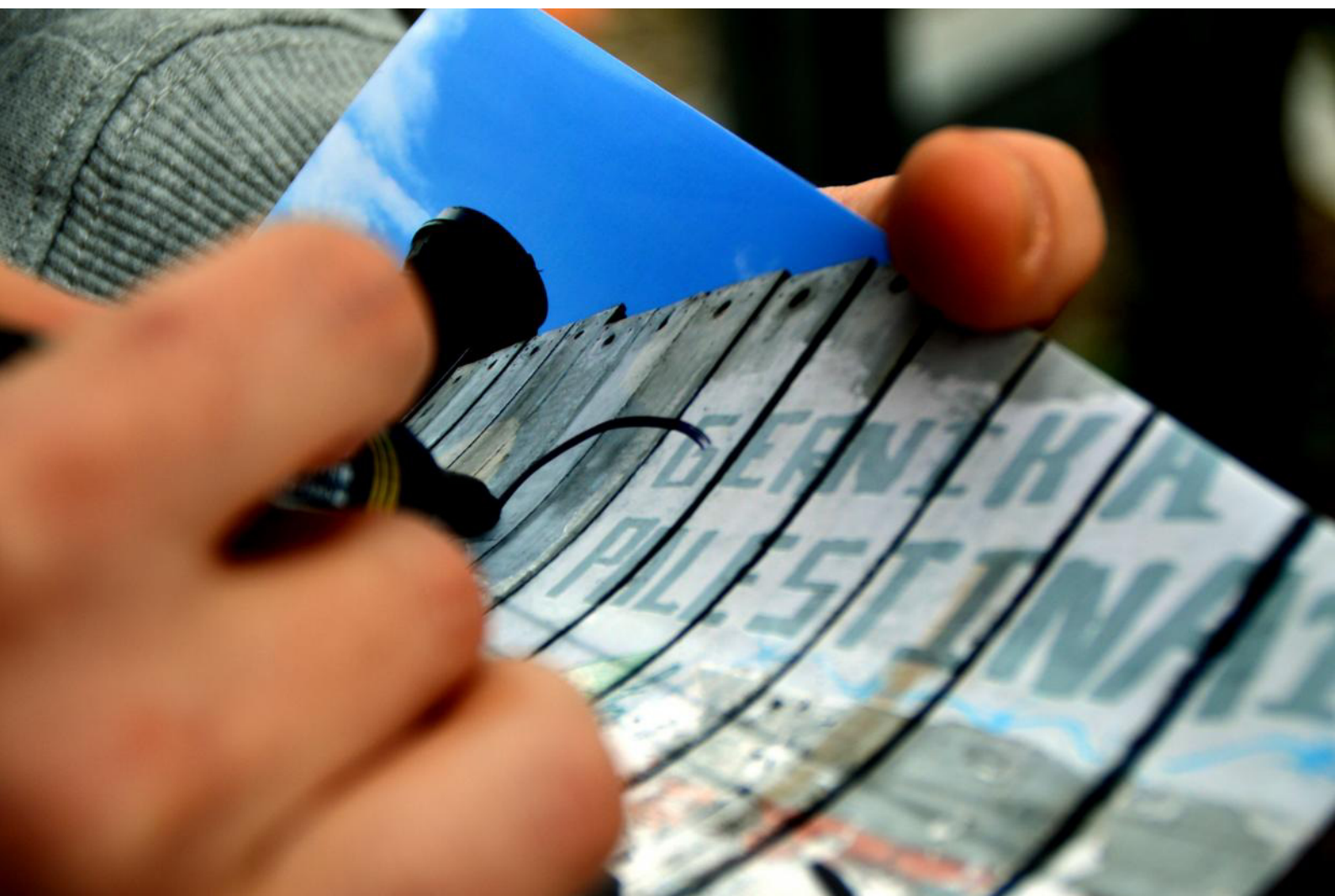








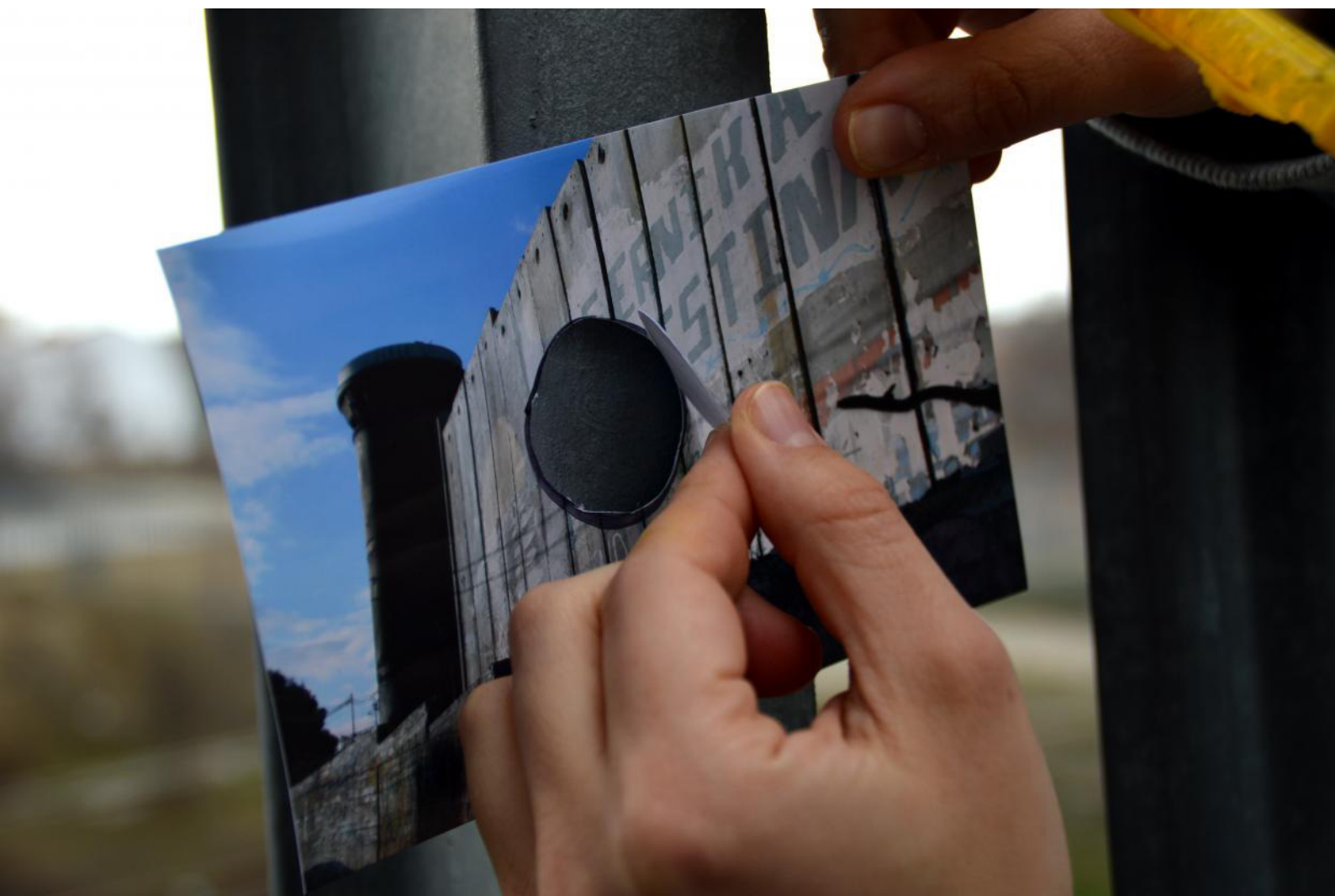


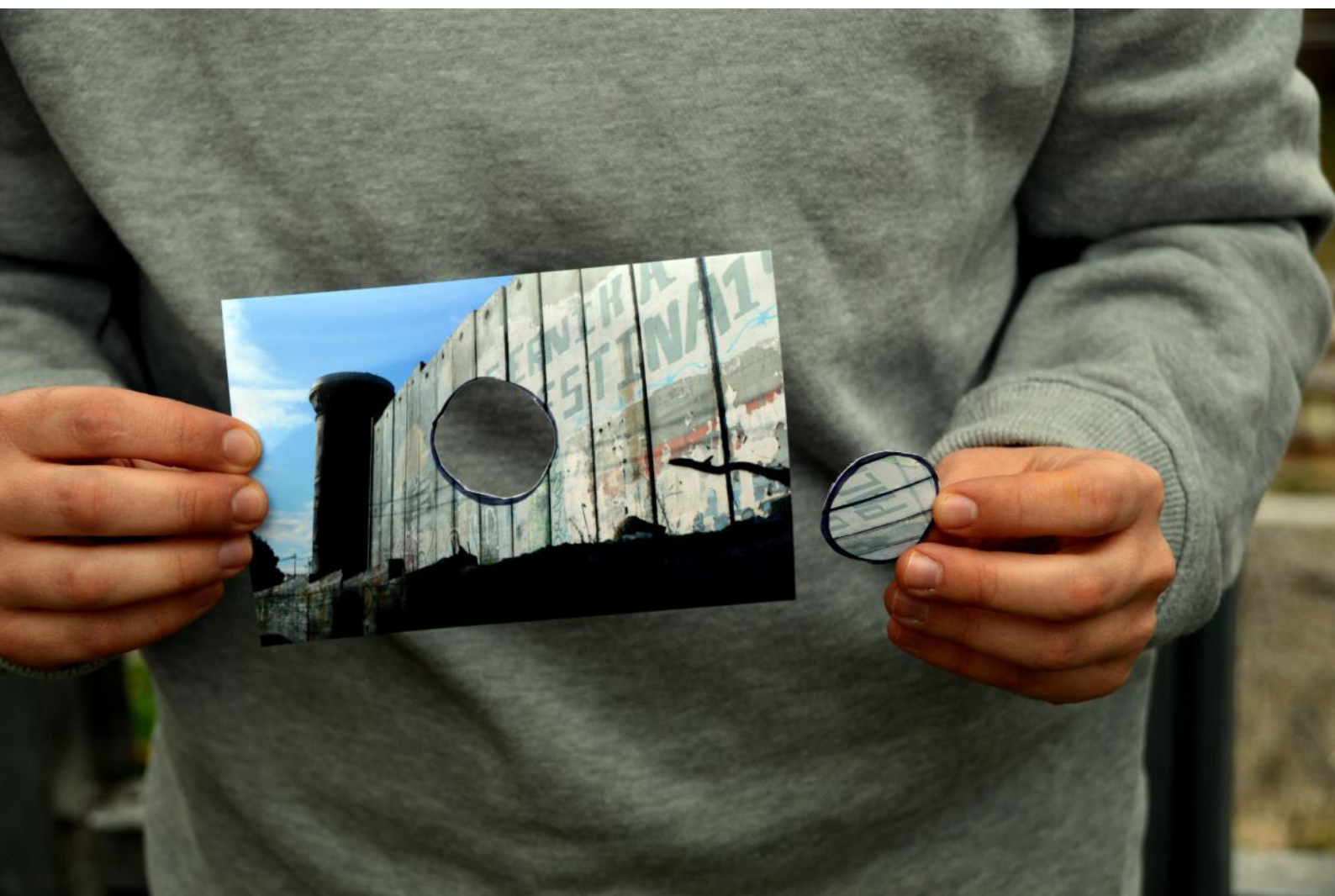




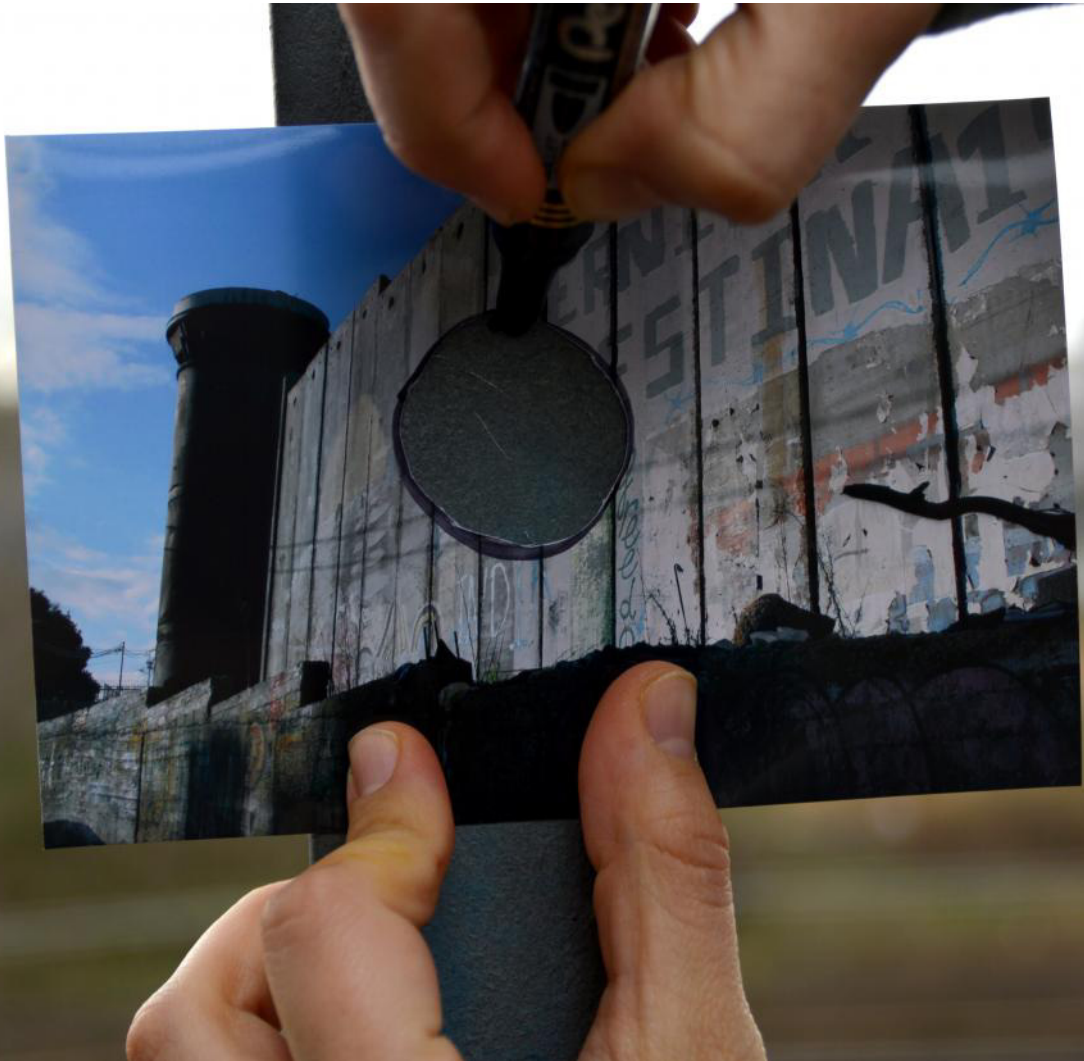
























3. WESTERN SAHARA: PARTICIPATING IN ARTIFARITI 2017

The main objective in participating in the 2017 edition of ARTifariti, with support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the American Political Science Association, was to do research from the inside, to develop a personal art project in the field: in the Sahrawi refugee camps of Tindouf (Algeria). The goal was not to do participant observation, but to do observed participation, which implies that taking part in artistic, social, political and affective processes was important in order to produce knowledge that does not only come from distant and cold analysis, but also from personal experience. It was an opportunity to consciously work from what Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls *razão quente* (warm reason) and develop a study that allows me to *sentipensar*, to feel-think.

The basic ideas and hypotheses from where I tried to structure my project were:

- Art can be used as a strategy for political participation / expression.
- Art is a tool for contesting borders.
- Art can also work as a way of building communities.

The methodological approach to this specific type of fieldwork included:

- Observation: looking at the way a festival such as ARTifariti works.
- Interaction: Talk to people in order to find out how Sahrawi refugees, local and international artists and organizers of ARTifariti reflect on the relationship between their activity and frontier architecture.
- Participation: attending ARTifariti not only as a researcher but also as an artist that experiences the practice of art in a frontier environment. Art and experience can also work as methodologies to develop field research. That is why I was there at the meeting both as a participant (artist) and as a researcher.

The 2017 ARTifariti edition took place between October 27th and November 7th in the wilaya of Bojador (Sahrawi refugee camps, Tindouf, Algeria). The art international meeting included accommodation with Sahrawi families as well as a visit to the city of Tifariti, in the Liberated Territories of the SADR (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic), and to the Moroccan wall. During the trip to Tifariti, participants of the festival were also invited to witness the detonation and destruction of a stockpile of Moroccan land mines. Finally, in Rabouni, an administrative city that is part of the refugee camps of Tindouf, I could also visit the Sahrawi Museum of Resistance, where several documents and objects concerning the Moroccan-Sahrawi war and the Sahrawi colonial experience are preserved and exhibited with the aim of making the conflict visible.

The ARTifariti festival coincided with the first edition of the International Theater Festival of

Sahara (October 27th - 31st, 2017) and with one of the meetings of the itinerant and nomadic Popular University of Social Movements. The collaboration between these three spaces for action and thinking (ARTifariti, the Popular University of Social Movements and the International Theater Festival of Sahara) was continuous. We, as artists participating in ARTifariti, worked together to write a joint document on the role of the arts in a context such as Western Sahara that was afterwards used as an input for the discussions that were developed at the Popular University; participants in the International Theater Festival could be part of ARTifariti's assemblies; and we all could attend the theater shows that were programmed as part of the Theater Festival, for example. This way, there was a continuous exchange between local and international inhabitants: refugees, anthropologists, politicians, activists, artists (performers, dancers, clowns, painters, video-artists, etc.) and scholars.

As a consequence of this fluid development of the events, ARTifariti could be defined as a space that allowed certain things (encounters, exchanges, dialogues) to happen. It worked as a platform for interaction and it placed the arts and artistic practice at the center of its dynamics. The arts became the common ability shared by all the participants, and it could be used to do as many things as can be imagined.

As already said, ARTifariti became a platform that allowed different experiences and practices to develop. Art was conceived by the organizers as a tool for social change. As it is described in the web-page dedicated to the project, ARTifariti is not merely an art meeting that takes place in Western Sahara, but also an event that focuses on the defense of human rights in this specific context. This means that there is a social and political involvement and that the festival is not neutral. The ideological position of ARTifariti is clear: its organizers claim for the end of the Moroccan occupation and for a free Western Sahara. The festival is organized by the Ministry of Culture of the SADR and the Asociación de Amistad con el Pueblo Saharaui de Sevilla (AAPSS), with the collaboration of other entities and artists.

Despite this apparent decolonial and collaborative *activist* environment, there were certain issues that should be mentioned in order to problematize the development of the ARTifariti festival:

- Touristification of activism: Looking at people making selfies in front of the Moroccan wall and fighting desperately to take pictures with their smartphones and reflex cameras of the stockpile of Moroccan land mines that was going to be destroyed afterwards is a symptom of how capitalism colonizes everything and deactivates the revolutionary dimension of a fact such as being in front of a violent border structure and witnessing the destruction of weapons used to make war.
- Importance of outsiders: The presence and prominence of local Sahrawi artists was very low

in comparison to the amount of international artists that participated in the festival.

- Difficulty in accessing the space: there were restrictions to Sahrawi people living in the refugee camps to access the space where we were all working (the School of Arts).

All of this implied that ARTifariti has become something colonial in a certain way. It has worked as a colonial artifact that, very subtly, has reproduced some practices that perpetuate a colonial way of being in the land of the *other*.

➔ PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

I got involved in the activities programmed by the ARTifariti organizers in three different ways: by developing my own art project, by working in collaboration with other artists, and by looking at other projects.

Personal project: *Muriendo muros, murmurando muros*

The project I designed to participate in ARTifariti was called *Muriendo muros, murmurando muros*. It was conceived as an artistic research process that focused on the concept of the *border* and the political management of space in Western Sahara. The artistic disciplines chosen to develop the project were the performing arts in a broad sense: physical theater, dance-theater and performance.

The main goal of the project was to study the routine choreographies that Sahrawi bodies perform each day in a landscape such as the one produced by the desert conditions and the architecture of the refugee camps. To achieve that goal, I decided to develop a workshop with a group of teenagers at the Secondary School of the wilaya of Bojador. The workshop included three sessions (between October 31st and November 2nd) of ninety minutes each (between 16:30h and 18:00h) and we also had the opportunity to show a small piece of our work in front of the audience on November 5th.

The workshop consisted of two simple tasks:

- In the first session I asked the participants to draw a map of their route from their houses to the school and share it with the rest of the group.
- After that, we spent the two remaining sessions developing different games aimed to embody and move/dance the maps that had previously been drawn.

The routine choreographies performed by the participants every day to arrive to their school became cartographic representations on paper (maps) and, then, they became movement again when we tried to dance them. However, the movement that arose from the attempt to dance the

maps was not identical to the movement the students normally perform to get to the school. What had changed? There were three main differences between movement before maps and after maps:

- The movement that arose from the maps was consciously designed. The different choreographies were created by focusing on certain characteristics of the routes from home to school. Sometimes, we focused on the type of movement (jumping, walking, riding a bike, driving a car); other times, we focused on the speed of the trajectories (fast, slow), etc.
- As a result of the constructed nature of the choreographies that arose from the maps, a estrangement effect was produced, which made it possible for the participants to keep on playing and enjoying the process instead of getting paralyzed and overwhelmed by the intensity of the experience.
- Movement itself became a game. As a group, we discovered the joyful essence of performing and/or reproducing other people's routes.

During the development of the workshop I did not only propose my own games. I was also open to proposals made by the participants. It was necessary to know the way that they use their playground and their classrooms to perform their own games in order not to colonize their participation in the workshop.

The language that we used to communicate was a mixed code of Arabic (Modern Standard Arabic, or الفصحى, since I do not know how to speak Hassaniya), Spanish and movements (body language, signs, gestures). Translation was an activity that each of us could do. All of us were responsible of helping each other in order to understand what was happening at each moment. This way, communication was possible thanks to the hybridization of the code.

The piece that we showed in front of the audience on November 5th was a dance-theater play entitled “انا امشي في الخريطة” (“I walk on the map”) and it consisted of a repertoire of the games we had played during the workshop with the aim of dancing the cartographic representations of the route from home to the school.

I agreed with the director of the school that attendance to the workshop was not mandatory. I did not want the workshop to become another subject such as Maths or History, but to provide a space for pleasure and enjoyment. As a consequence, participation during the four-days workshop was fluctuating. The first and the second day, there were fifteen students attending the workshop. However, the third day, there were only four students; and the last day only three people came. Despite this fluctuation, it was possible to develop the art research and to write a play together with the Sahrawi teenagers.



ARTifariti 2017. Picture by Bryan Gerard Duffy

Collaboration in other projects

- Working together with Marta Nieto

Marta Nieto is an art teacher at a school in Seville (Spain) and she is also a visual artist. She came to the refugee camps of Tindouf with the aim of developing a workshop at the same school where I was working and painting a mural. She is also theoretically reflecting on and researching the relationship between maps and territories. I decided to ask her for collaboration when I realized both our projects focused on space as the main topic of research. The mural as well as the workshop that Marta Nieto wanted to develop during ARTifariti were related to the Dymaxion map, created by Buckminster Fuller, which represents the globe on the surface of an icosahedron. This cartographic representation avoids the idea of the North being above and the South being below. The way the land is distributed on the map depends on the way the icosahedron is unfolded. However, what she wanted to do is to create a map of the sky, instead of a map of the globe. As one of the Sahrawi organizers said, “in Western Sahara everything is sky”, the territory is made of yellow sand and blue sky, so it made sense to draw a map of the stars and constellations. Marta Nieto's mural, then, represented the sky in an unfolded icosahedron.

On the other hand during the workshop, in which I collaborated, teenagers were asked to build their own icosahedron. They were also asked to draw the map of their lives (their trajectories) on

the unfolded icosahedron by connecting a group of stars, which made a constellation appear. This way, each icosahedron contained a constellation that symbolically represented the life-cartography of each participant. However, the creative nature of the students made it possible to create many other forms beyond the icosahedron. They used the unfolded icosahedron to create crowns, wizard wands and boats made of paper. They re-appropriated the rules and materials of the workshop and created their own path.



ARTifariti 2017. Picture by Marta Nieto.

- Working together with Bryan Gerard Duffy and Emmet Sheerin.

Bryan Gerard Duffy is a multifaceted visual artist from Ireland that worked in collaboration with Emmet Sheerin to film a documentary on the question of Western Sahara with the aim of making the conflict visible in their country. Bryan Gerard Duffy also had another project which consisted of an exchange between Irish and Sahrawi students. He came to the refugee camps with a series of drawings made by students of the Brackloon National School in Westport and a video that showed some of these students playing a traditional Irish tune for their friends in Western Sahara. I made a translation of the subtitles of the video from English into Spanish and helped in the process of folding the drawings to make boats that would be given to the Sahrawi kids at school. Sahrawi children were also asked to make drawings for their *friends* in Ireland and to sing a song that was filmed both by Bryan Gerard Duffy and Emmet Sheerin. This project again (indirectly) implied a

reflection on space since it made a distant space (Ireland) become present in Western Sahara thanks to the screen of a laptop and the drawings made by Irish students. The exchange was possible because a space was placed inside another space.

- Working together with Hanin Colectivo Escénico.

Hanin is a Mexican dance collective specialized in Arabian and contemporary dance that developed a workshop in collaboration with Sahrawi women and performed their piece “Germinando” during ARTifariti 2017. “Germinando” is a dance piece that is modified by the context. Its structure is somehow site-specific and it takes elements of the environment in which it is performed. The name of the piece comes from the motto that became famous in Mexico after the Ayotzinapa case of 2014, “nos quisieron enterrar, pero no sabían que éramos semillas” (they tried to bury us, but they did not know that we were seeds). I was asked to perform the piece with them and I took part of one of their rehearsals, even though, finally, I could not attend the performance and was replaced by another friend. However, the small collaboration and the talks with the members of the collective provided me with enough experience and information. The project is placed in a southern coordinate, both geographical and ideological. “Germinando” is a contribution of southern women that come from one part of the Global South (Mexico) to another part of the Global South (Western Sahara). This way an exchange of ideas and movements happens. As it was said when describing Bryan Gerard Duffy and Emmet Sheerin's project, Hanin brings a space inside another space, which makes the exchange possible.

➔ ART IN THE BORDERLANDS OF WESTERN SAHARA

ARTifariti 2017 made it possible for four projects such as the ones above described to develop an artistic reflection on space in a territory such as Western Sahara that is characterized by its fragmentation. It is divided into the eastern Occupied Territories, the western Liberated Territories and the refugee camps in Tindouf (Algeria). The Moroccan wall, even if it is not visible from most of the Sahrawi emplacements and it does not affect directly the daily lives of Sahrawis, meaning it does not become an obstacle for daily activities, is the architectural military structure that reproduces and embodies this artificial fragmentation of the land, the territory, and makes it impossible for the Sahrawi people to achieve its sovereignty. Its length of 2.700km approximately, as well as the land mines surrounding it, are the artifacts that divide the desert into two parts. The four projects that have been described in this section share one common characteristic regarding their relationship to the complexity of the Sahrawi territory: they de-fragment space and re-unify the

territory symbolically. Two of the projects relate to space as the object of study (*Muriendo muros*, *murmurando muros* and Marta Nieto's project), and the other two relate to it as a tool for the development of artistic practice (Bryan Gerard Duffy and Emmet Sheerin's project and "Germinando"). However, despite this difference in the use of space, the four projects reach the goal of reunification by developing different strategies:

- *Muriendo muros*, *murmurando muros*. This project was an attempt to become aware of the materiality of Sahrawi daily trajectories, such as those that children perform everyday to arrive to school from their houses in the refugee camps. However, there are a great amount of other and more dangerous routes that Sahrawis normally follow. The project focuses on the movement of bodies in the landscape despite the obstacles it encounters. This way, the Sahrawi territory becomes one that can be walked, even though it can sometimes be risky. Bodies always find out strategies of crossing to the other side. The body is the artifact that makes the reunification possible.
- Marta Nieto's project. The decision of making a world map by representing the sky instead of the land created a new perspective from which to look at the Sahrawi landscape: this landscape becomes blue instead of yellow and it is not divided by any border structure but the horizon. The sky has no barriers and is seen as an unlimited space that connects Laayoune with the refugee camps and the Liberated Territories.
- Bryan Gerard Duffy and Emmet Sheerin's project. The project developed by these two Irish artists allowed Sahrawi kids to introduce their country as an undivided territorial entity to their friends in Ireland. The similarities and differences between historical territorial conflicts in Ireland and current territorial conflicts in Western Sahara are latent but present in this art project.
- "Germinando". Hanin, the Mexican dance collective, achieved a reunification of the Sahrawi territory in the context of the Global South. The workshop that was developed by the collective as well as the piece of dance produced an hybridization: Mexican elements mixed with Sahrawi and Arab elements, which produced a connection of different souths.

4. EXHIBITION: *EN TIERRA DE NADIE*

In February 2018 I attended the exhibition entitled *En Tierra de Nadie*, in Matadero, Madrid. The exhibition was a reflection on the situation of the people that try to arrive to the North – West (understood as a symbolic place, not necessarily as a physical and geographical one) in four specific contexts: Spain – Morocco, Italy and the situation in the Mediterranean sea, Greece - Turkey and

Guatemala – Mexico. The exhibition also focused on the work developed by CEAR (Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado) to improve the conditions of immigrants and refugees during their displacements. However, I do not want to develop a reflection on the information that was provided in the exhibition, but on the way it was provided. There was an architectural design of the exhibition aimed to reproduce the structure of a border and a refugee camp. When I arrived to the room where the exhibition was placed, I saw a fence with a section made of barbed-wire on its top. The fence was surrounding and demarcating an empty space. Inside the perimeter, there was a smartphone recording the bodies of visitors. This way, I could see myself as if I were on the other side, as if the fence was an obstacle that blocked my trajectory, I could look at myself through the fence. Behind this fenced perimeter there were three white tents representing a refugee camp. I was observing the architectural structure of the exhibition, when a worker approached and told me how to see and behave during the visit. He explained the way how I had to move through the different spaces in order to understand the exhibition. That moment was very relevant since the man was showing me how to move through the *border* created to represent the *border*. He was telling me the rules to play the game: he was providing me with the information I needed to inhabit the border appropriately. Even if it was not his objective to produce a performance or an artwork, I looked at him as if it actually was. And I found myself thinking about reproducing the same performance in front of the Israeli wall, for example. What will it imply? What is the difference between a wall that has been built as an artwork and a wall that is being built to reinforce a border line?

What is art producing?

CHAPTER 6: WHAT DOES ART PRODUCE IN BORDERLANDS? TOWARDS AN ETHICS OF ARCHITECTURE

*“Hay tantos territorios como formas-de-vida
que los habitan”*

Consejo Nocturno¹

In this chapter I try to show the way how artistic practice works in frontier environments. I will argue that art can work as a device that contributes to the dis-articulation of reality itself. Based on the examples that have been described and analyzed in chapters 4 and 5, I look at the relationship between frontier architecture and artistic practice in Western Sahara and the West Bank (in Palestine) and I try to elucidate the mechanisms that make it possible for art to disassemble the border, if not materially, at least symbolically. In other words, I try to show how artistic practice destroys the wall either as a structure or as a concept (or both). My objective is not to argue that every single artwork or artistic project that is produced or developed in these bordered contexts becomes a tool against walls, but to find out the way how certain practices dismantle the border both structurally and conceptually (and even ontologically). Thus, this chapter examines one of the possibilities that art, as a tool for participation, provides: and it is the possibility to *break* the wall².

As it has been argued in previous chapters, borders and frontier structures such as walls, fences or checkpoints produce a very specific landscape, a very specific space that is related to a series of very specific material conditions for life and existence (choreographication of movement, obstructionism of daily trajectories and routes, etc.). Therefore, artistic practice does not always focus on the *wall*, but on these material conditions caused by the presence of border structures. This means that, sometimes, artistic practices do not produce a change on the border itself, but on the consequences of the border, on its social, political, economic and physical surroundings. As it has been said, the border is not a line, but an area, an atmosphere a landscape (that can be called *borderscape*). The artistic practices that have been analyzed in previous chapters operate in these border-areas that can expand infinitely due to the exiled mode of being related to the Palestinian and Sahrawi bodies. The border is embodied and can, therefore, be everywhere.

¹ Consejo Nocturno. 2018. *Un habitar más fuerte que la metrópili*. Logroño: Pepitas de Calabaza

² I approach artistic analysis from concepts such as *performativity*, *production of space* and *poetic materialism*. However, I would also like to mention Bourdieu's approach to the analysis of artworks through the concept of *field*. Bourdieu, as Paola Suárez Ávila explains, “considera que las obras realizadas son producto de las posibilidades que el agente encuentra en el campo” (Suárez Ávila 2007, 38). Thus, the artwork emerges from the tensions that happen in the field. The artwork is placed in the social environment as one of its components. It does not *represent* society, it is a part of society.

The way how artistic practice works in these environments is going to be theorized by constantly going back to the cases studied in chapters 4 and 5 and by addressing five different concepts: interruption, disruption, dis-realization, *destitution* (in French) and re-existence. Afterwards, I will place the question of artistic practice in borderscapes in a broader theoretical and more philosophical field and I will elaborate the link between the ability of the arts to disarticulate reality and the Deleuzian and Guattarian concepts of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization. References to concepts developed by the Grupo Surrealista de Madrid such as *poetic materialism* or *poetry by all means*, will also be present. I will also discuss the possibility of looking at the arts, artistic practice and artists as political interlocutors. In other words, I will discuss the limits of the arts in borderscapes to work as political entities that do not only represent but also reflect on sociopolitical and economic questions and transform them. Finally, some questions about the ethics of architecture will be made.

1. WHAT DO ARTS DO?

➔ INTERRUPTION

In the chapter “Poetic Interruption: A Pessoaan Concept for Reading the Lyric” included in the book *Atlantic Poets: Fernando Pessoa's Turn in Anglo-American Modernism* (2003), Irene Ramalho Santos analyzes the role of interruption in the production of poetry. The author describes the different ways in which life comes inside the poem and interrupts it. However, this interruption does not cancel the poem, it does not make it impossible, but the other way around: it contributes to its development. Interruption makes the poem possible. From an etymological point of view, *poetry* and *poem*, come from a Greek verb that directly points to the art of *doing*. Ramalho Santos refers to this etymology and links it to the process of building both life and poems. Construction is the result of doing things. “Poiesis, that is to say, human life-as-constructed, depends on interruption, silencing, deworking (*désouvement*), and waiting (*attente*) for the realization of *the work* to be possible (realization, I mean, as understanding and fulfillment of the work)” (Ramalho Santos 2003, 223). Life is constructed and a poem is constructed as well.

Ramalho Santos focuses on the political dimension of life. Life contains politics and the process of interruption that takes place when composing a poem is primarily related to this question: the arrival of politics to the poem, and the way how the poem affects politics “Poetry always interrupts from the mutually interruptive tension between the poetical and the political” (*ibid.*) Ramalho Santos theorizes the question of interruption by deactivating the myth of the capsule that isolates artistic creativity. Contamination is inevitable. Politics are always present.

Whereas Ramalho Santos principally elaborates the way how life and politics interrupts the poem, I would like to develop the concept of interruption to look at the opposite process: the way how artistic practice interrupts life, but always taking into account that the relationship between art and life is, as the author argued, mutually interruptive.

In borderscapes such as the ones that are part of Western Sahara and Palestine, different frontier architectural structures become obstacles that interrupt life and the territory. Territorial continuity is constantly being questioned. However, the artistic practices that are developed in these borderscapes can work as obstacles that interrupt the border. Thus, art becomes a practice that interrupts the interruption. When Khaled Jarrar films himself while playing badminton with a friend from both sides of a section of the Israeli Separation Barrier, he interrupts the main functions of the architectural structure (separation, segregation, occupation, annexation...). When Khalil Rabah creates an office of the United States of Palestine Airlines in London, he interrupts the conceptual inertia that supports the idea of Palestine as a nonexistent entity. Interruption is related to the action of *stopping doing something* in order to *do something else*. It always implies a transformation. Interruption is creative. One cannot interrupt something by doing nothing. Interruption itself implies the doing. Interruption itself implies a productive action.

➔ DISRUPTION

As part of an art residency in Rood Noot (Utrecht, The Netherlands) in 2015, I developed a project in which I worked on disruption:

A disruptive body is a dissident, discordant, incongruous, dissenting, heretical, heterodox, nonconformist body that makes others become uncomfortable when realising the absurdity of being normal, normative, orthodox, docile, coherent, obedient and intelligible. Animals are disruptive because they do not give a fuck, because they are still free, even though humans try to control them. They cannot lose their dignity. There is always nobleness in their eyes. Their feelings cannot be hypocritically hidden. Their smell cannot be hypocritically hidden. They are intrinsically disruptive because they are impolite. They are not afraid of getting dirty. The disruptive body is the wrong body, the alternative body. The non-body. The one that has not been defined yet. Neither even imagined.

Disruptive actions are those we are afraid of.

Disruptive objects are out of place and out of time.

The previous lines were part of a text that was produced as a result of the residency³. Disruption, as I conceptualized it at that moment, is closely linked to the concept of interruption since it implies the arrival of the unexpected, the non-normative. The disruptive thing is the one that makes

3 <http://olgablazquez.wixsite.com/as-coisas-do-tempo/veldwerk>

everyone stop and realize that there was a continuum before interruption happened, a continuum that has been broken. Maybe, that continuum implied a certain rhythm, a certain order, a certain disposition of objects, or maybe just a norm. Disruption breaks that order in a subversive way, but not necessarily in a violent way (even though a certain degree of violence is involved).

Any artistic intervention in a borderscape implies a disruption because it alters the dynamics of that specific space. Art itself can be understood as a disruptive discipline that is aimed to produce estrangement at some point. This does not mean that every artwork is intrinsically revolutionary or liberating. Art can also be aligned with hegemonic and dominant powers and can support the colonial matrix of power. The cases I am studying in this PhD Thesis, however, are those that contribute to the destruction of the wall, not to its continuation.

➔ DIS-REALIZATION

In an essay entitled “De la poesía como ataque a la realidad” (2017), which was written by a colleague called Adrián Espada as an assignment for a subject at University, poetry is characterized as an activity that attacks reality.

Lo que niega la poesía, en tanto que potencia de realización, es a la realidad en tanto que orden de determinación del ser, en tanto que ley interiorizada del ser de las cosas, en tanto que decreto, disposición u ordenanza que les dice a las cosas (y a nosotros en tanto que también seamos cosas en ella, cosas reales) lo que son, esto es, lo que deben ser. Lo que niega la poesía, aquello contra lo que se subleva, es contra las formas fijas y conformes que ‘son lo que son’ yendo contra las fronteras bien trazadas y delimitadas de lo real dominante (Espada 2017, 4).

As it was already done by Ramalho Santos, Espada articulates the discourse about poetry from an etymological point of view that allows him to highlight the agency that is inherent of it. *Poiesis* as creation, as production, as the doing. This creative essence of the poetical activity, that is also present in other forms of art (since the poetical is not exclusive of poetry) makes it possible for artistic practice to attack *reality as it is*, meaning reality as the dominant and normative mode of being, the *must be*. The arts create realities that contradict Reality. The arts build realities that can contribute to a process of dis-Realization.

Larissa Sansour achieves a certain degree of dis-Realization when she places the state of Palestine in a building or when she represents the territory (the land) of Palestine on the surface of the Moon. By developing a process of exaggeration and excessiveness in the way of presenting the physical and spatial possibilities for Palestine, she achieves the dis-Realization of the dominant discourse that supports the idea of a state (either one or two) as the only solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Sansour provides the spectator with an over-realization of the State and the

land of Palestine, and this over-realization, that is linked to humor, irony and sarcasm, actually implies a dis-Realization of Reality.

→ DESTITUTION

In their book, *Maintenant* (2017), Comité Invisible underlines the importance of delving into the process of *la destitution*. They talk about a subversive strategy to produce a social transformation. Instead of reproducing the political dominant discourse and practice that stresses the importance of *constituer (la constitution)* and *instituer (la institution)*, they suggest the action of *destituer* as the key to achieve the change, the transformation. *Destituer* is closely linked to the action of running away, deserting. The *destitution* is the exit.

Destituere en latin signifie: placer debout à part, dresser isolément; abandonner; mettre à part, laisser tomber, supprimer; décevoir, tromper. Là où la logique constituante vient s'écraser sur l'appareil du pouvoir dont elle entend prendre le contrôle, une puissance destituante se préoccupe plutôt de lui échapper, de lui retirer toute prise sur elle, à mesure qu'elle gagne en prise sur le monde qu'à l'écart elle forme. Son geste propre est *la sortie*, tout autant que le geste constituant est la prise d'assaut. Dans une logique destituante, la lutte contre l'État et le capital vaut d'abord pour la sortie de la normalité capitaliste qui s'y vit, pour la désertion des rapports merdiques à soi, aux autres et au monde qui s'y expérimentent. Ainsi donc, là où les constituants se placent dans un rapport dialectique de lutte avec ce qui règne pour s'en emparer, la logique destituante obéit à la nécessité vitale de *s'en dégager* (Comité Invisible 2017, 76).

When the Sahrawi women, Jadiyah Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia and Warda Belid, that are members of the collective Luchadoras por Nuestros Sueños decided to develop their own artistic project based on *melfas* and became independent from the organization where they were working, they developed a process of *destitution*. They quit the labor capitalist logic that tied them to a specific way of production, which allowed them to focus on their objective to create a self-managed project. Even if the process of *destitution* as it is described to analyze Luchadoras por Nuestros Sueños' artistic practice is not directly related to frontier architecture itself, there is an indirect relationship. Jadiyah Blal, Fatma Bahia, Rafia Embarek, Nena Bahia and Warda Belid are precarious workers and precarious bodies that live in the refugee camps of Tindouf. To quit that situation at any level (for example, by developing a self-managed project) is also to quit the border. What I mean is that the decision to quit the capitalist precarious mode of producing is also related to an attack against the border. In a conflict that is related to a web of interrelationships, an action performed in any point of the web can produce a reverberation in any other point.

The process of *destitution* is also present in Jarrar's work. When Khaled Jarrar makes sculptures

by using the materials he previously takes from the Israeli wall, one can also notice that there is a process of *destitution* taking place. However, this *destitution* is followed by the *constitution* of an artwork, which may make one wonder: what would it happen if the artwork itself consisted of taking the materials from the wall (only)? Is it totally necessary to create something else? Is not the act of taking materials from the wall itself an artwork? Or is the *destitution* a process that does not require anything more than the act of *leaving something*? The same questions can be asked if we think about the project Wall of Sand: the sand is taken from the Moroccan wall in order to be sold and sent abroad. In this case, there is no object built with the sand taken from the border, however, something else is done with it after having taken it, as if the process of *destitution* was not enough. Agamben reflects on the relationship between constituent power (*potere costituente*) and destituent power (*potenza destituente*) as follows:

Nel pensiero della modernità, i mutamenti politici radicali sono stati pensati attraverso il concetto di un 'potere costituente'. Ogni potere costituito presuppone alla sua origine un potere costituente che, attraverso un processo che ha di solito la forma di una rivoluzione, lo pone in essere e garantisce. Se la nostra ipotesi sulla struttura dell' archè è corretta e se il problema antologico fondamentale è oggi non l'opera, ma l'inoperosità e se questa può, tuttavia, attestarsi solo rispetto a un'opera, allora l'accesso a una diversa figura della politica non potrà avere la forma di un 'potere costituente', bensì quella di qualcosa che possiamo provvisoriamente chiamare 'potenza destituente'. E se al potere costituente corrispondono rivoluzioni, sommosse e nuove costituzioni, cioè una violenza che pone e costituisce il nuovo diritto, per la potenza destituente occorre pensare tutt'altre strategie, la cui definizione è il compito della politica che viene. Un potere che è stato soltanto abbattuto con una violenza costituente risorgerà in altra forma, nell'incessante, inesorabile, desolata dialettica fra potere costituente e potere costituito, violenza che pone il diritto e violenza che lo conserva (Agamben 2014, 336-337).

Destituent power guarantees that there is no return to the violent way of doing that was previous to the *destitution*: “Secondo lo schema che abbiamo tante volte descritto, costituente è quella figura del potere in cui una potenza destituente viene catturata e neutralizzata, in modo da assicurare che essa non possa rivolgersi contro il potere o l'ordine giuridico come tale, ma solo contro una sua determinata figura storica” (*ibid.*, 338). The constitution of *something* then implies the neutralization of any attempt of *destitution* and the reproduction of the type of power that existed *before*.

➔ RE-EXISTENCE

In “Pedagogías de la re-existencia. Artistas indígenas y afrocolombianos” (2012), Adolfo Albán Anchite, defines the concept of re-existence as “los dispositivos que las comunidades crean y desarrollan para inventarse cotidianamente la vida y poder de esta manera confrontar la realidad

establecida” (Albán Anchite 2012, 455). The process of re-existence depends on the development of a series of devices and tools that make it possible to produce one's own existence despite the dominant discourse on the non-existence of certain bodies. It is a process that is related to the process of dis-Realization. If the arts allow for the creation of realities that attack the Reality, they can also provide tools to make the spectrum of existence become wider. Re-existing consists of declaring that something that has been described as nonexistent, actually exists. It is a daily process of performing one's existence –do not confuse this process with the processes of *constitution* and *institution* of beings–. To practice the arts is to practice the existence of the arts. Emily Jacir asked several Palestinians to tell her something that they could not do because of the constraints imposed by the Israeli occupation. Participants, then, asked Jacir to visit a place or a family member, for example. The artist, who was holding an US passport (and was benefiting from the privileges it implies) carried out the wishes of many Palestinians. She somehow took a portion, a part, a section, a segment of the existence of each person she was talking to and embodied and performed it through her own existence. Jacir performed re-existence: the desire *taken* from another person was achieved, became existent, thanks to her artistic project that was developed through Jacir's own body.

2. ARTS AND ONTOLOGY

All these processes or mechanisms that artistic practice allows to happen are possible because art is a trajectory. This implies that art is a process and, therefore, it is in constant touch with the surrounding context (with Reality) during its development. Art does not happen suddenly, but continuously. The *trajectory* is the opposite of the *project*, which is the word used to refer to most of artistic *things*. Nowadays, there is no art without project, just in the same way that Bernard Tschumi argues that there is no architecture without plan. Authors such as Bojana Kunst have reflected on this fact. Art is based on the project, which implies a temporality that is always pointing to the future. The project is the promise, the not-already-done. The project is what is never achieved. The never-already-done. The project is closely linked to the way capitalism is developing nowadays and to the new ways of exploitation in the field of arts as well as in many other areas of labor⁴. However, even though the project is what capitalism requires from artists (in order to apply for art residencies, for example), art is also related to the trajectory. The French philosopher Étienne Souriau developed the concept of the *trajectory* and its relationship to the artwork in his text “Du mode d’existence de l’œuvre à faire” (2009). The trajectory is what identifies the artwork while it is being created. The artwork is considered to be finished as a result of the process of having been

4 I developed this topic in my MA Thesis, “Art Needs Time: Temporality of Laziness in the Performing Arts” (2015), University of Utrecht.

creating it. There is a moment in which the artwork appears as being finished, complete. Souriau's focus on the trajectory instead of the project implies that there is a continuous dialogue between the creator(s) and the artwork. (Re)appropriation takes place in this trajectory. The separation barriers of Palestine and Western Sahara are border spaces, but, as Bernard Tschumi would argue, they are also events. Any space is an event. It is not a container of an event, but an event itself⁵. And an event is characterized by the dynamics of the happenings that take place as part of its occurrence. There is no event without trajectory. Artistic re-appropriation⁶, then, is a process that takes part of this trajectory. The separation barrier is never finished because there are continuous artistic (and non-artistic) interventions that shape its structure and even its mode of being (its ontological status). The finished border as well as the finished artwork end up being illusions that cannot be achieved. The constant tension between the border structure and the artistic impetus is so hard that one can only talk about the interaction between both of them. There is never a moment of motionlessness. The process of appropriation and re-appropriation can happen many times⁷ since the result of previous interventions on the border structures can be deactivated (deleted, destroyed). Thus, appropriation is always a process of coming back again (and again, and again). It is related to an echo effect: repetition.

Re-appropriation implies that one can look at the wall as a finished *tool* but never as a finished *object*. As a tool, the wall follows many specific objectives (occupation, segregation, etc), but as an object, it carries in its own structure the possibility of its own destruction. As José Manuel Rojo argues in the article “Espejismo y materialización del objeto fantasma” (2015), “el objeto desborda siempre el instrumento” (Rojo 2015, 216). The tool (the purpose, the plan, the project, the objective) can never replace the object (the trajectory, the unplanned, the unexpected). The distance between the tool and the object is what makes re-appropriation possible. Re-appropriation happens in that space of in-betweenness. Re-appropriation implies an intervention on the tool (the border) in order to bring it back to the object (the wall) again.

5 This is why it is impossible to *occupy* a space. There is no empty place that can be *occupied*. Space is always full of itself.

6 The concept of re-appropriation has been developed as a spatial category during this PhD Thesis because *space* is the main field upon which it reflects. However, we must be aware that re-appropriation also implies a transformation of time: Jacques Rancière develops this topic when analyzing the movement of the French *gilets jaunes* and the way it occupies/inhabits space: “occuper, c’est aussi créer un temps spécifique” (Rancière 2019). Also, we must keep in mind that the space that is being re-appropriated is broader than the space that is being inhabited. As Paola Suárez Ávila (2007) argues when analyzing artistic practices in the borderlands of Tijuana, “al iniciar el estudio, yo confundía el espacio social de acción de la comunidad artística con el espacio imaginado, es decir, el espacio apropiado por la comunidad. Pero, la distinción entre uno y otro lo concebí al comprender que aún cuando la comunidad artística solo se desenvuelve en Tijuana, el espacio que imaginan y que se apropian es la región fronteriza de Tijuana-San Diego” (Suárez Ávila 2007, 40).

7 Lefebvre distinguishes between definitive re-appropriation and temporary re-appropriations, or what he calls *diversion*: “Diversion is in itself merely appropriation, not creation –a reappropriation which can call but a temporary halt to domination” (Lefebvre 1991, 168). I argue, though, that definitive re-appropriation cannot be achieved, there is always a tension that makes space be appropriated and re-appropriated. Thus, the distinction between re-appropriation and diversion does not make sense in this PhD Thesis.

This definition of re-appropriation as *the coming back to the object* can also be analyzed as a mode of decolonization. The tool colonizes the object since it imposes a specific identity linked to a purpose. The tool is always identifiable, not because its mechanisms are totally clear and understandable, but because it is intrinsically related to a specific *what* (a transcendental objective), whereas the process of re-appropriation and the emergence of the object from the remains of the tool implies an immanent practice of *how*⁸ to inhabit the border decolonially in order to make it become a mere wall, an object again. There is a constant process of debordering and rebordering of the wall. Following Agamben's description of the concept of re-appropriation in chapter 8 of *L'uso dei corpi. Homo Sacer, IV, 2* (2014), the process of re-appropriation of space is also a type of expropriation since it makes the border become an alien (it is *debordered*). The border is out of itself as a result of a process of estrangement. Artistic practices and poetic actions make the border distance from itself: they produce an expropriation.

And, finally, the processes of re-appropriation and decolonization can also be seen as processes of reterritorialization:

Comment les mouvements de déterritorialisation et les procès de reterritorialisation ne seraient-ils pas relatifs, perpétuellement en branchement, pris les uns dans les autres? L'orchidée se déterritorialise en formant une image, un calque de guêpe; mais la guêpe se reterritorialise sur cette image. La guêpe se déterritorialise pourtant, devenant elle-même une pièce dans l'appareil de reproduction de l'orchidée ; mais elle reterritorialise l'orchidée, en en transportant le pollen. La guêpe et l'orchidée font rhizome, en tant qu'hétérogènes. On pourrait dire que l'orchidée imite la guêpe dont elle reproduit l'image de manière signifiante (mimesis, mimétisme, leurre, etc.). Mais ce n'est vrai qu'au niveau des strates - parallélisme entre deux strates telles qu'une organisation végétale sur l'une imite une organisation animale sur l'autre. En même temps il s'agit de tout autre chose : plus du tout imitation, mais capture de code, plus-value de code, augmentation de valence, véritable devenir, devenir-guêpe de l'orchidée, devenir-orchidée de la guêpe, chacun de ces devenirs assurant la dé territorialisation d'un des termes et la reterritorialisation de l'autre, les deux devenirs s'enchaînant et se relayant suivant une circulation d'intensités qui pousse la déterritorialisation toujours plus loin. Il n'y a pas imitation ni ressemblance, mais explosion de deux séries hétérogènes dans la ligne de fuite composée d'un rhizome commun qui ne peut plus être attribué, ni soumis à quoi que ce soit de signifiant (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 17).

One can look at the relationship between the frontier structure and the artistic practice through the concept of rhizome. The wall and the artwork that intervenes in its structure allow for a series of (re)(de)territorailizations. The artwork implies a line of flight, a deterritorialization. It makes it possible to *destituer* the essence of the border: the borderity. *Destituer* would refer here to the process of building the object from the ramains of the tool. The mode-of-being of the border is somehow canceled thanks to the mechanisms that the artwork (which works as a device) activates.

8 This difference between the *what* and the *how* is developed in different texts written by Tiqqun. Tiqqun is a collective french authorship and philosophical position from which several texts have been written; it is related to the Comité Invisible.

However, the structure of the border itself takes the artwork back again to the borderity, to the colonial tool, to the context, to the territory: it reterritorializes the artwork. This is why the relationship between the border and the artwork can be described as rhizomatic. Artistic practice on borders is not merely linked to the act of delivering a message or representing an idea. Artistic practice principally *does* things on the border and suggests a way of being in/on the border. It is necessary to change the perspective from which one looks at artistic practice on border spaces: again the focus is not on WHAT is being done, but on HOW it is being done. Focusing on the *how* implies looking at the processes that take place in the space between the wall and the bodies that develop artistic projects.

As a consequence of this change in the way of looking (from the WHAT to the HOW), artistic practice cannot be associated with the representation of the world anymore. Art on borders do not represent the border. It is not a only question of representation of Reality, but of presentation of a new reality, or a new relationship with reality (with no capital letter). This is why artistic practice can be compared to a cartography, to a map on which different lines, traces and tracks are drawn:

Tout autre est le rhizome, carte et non pas calque. Faire la carte, et pas le calque. L'orchidée ne reproduit pas le calque de la guêpe, elle fait carte avec la guêpe au sein d'un rhizome. Si la carte s'oppose au calque, c'est qu'elle est tout entière tournée vers une expérimentation en prise sur le réel. La carte ne reproduit pas un inconscient fermé sur lui-même, elle le construit. Elle concourt à la connexion des champs, au déblocage des corps sans organes, à leur ouverture maximum sur un plan de consistance. Elle fait elle-même partie du rhizome. La carte est ouverte, elle est connectable dans toutes ses dimensions, démontable, renversable, susceptible de recevoir constamment des modifications. Elle peut être déchirée, renversée, s'adapter à des montages de toute nature, être mise en chantier par un individu, un groupe, une formation sociale. On peut la dessiner sur un mur, la concevoir comme une œuvre d'art, la construire comme une action politique ou comme une méditation . C'est peut-être un des caractères les plus importants du rhizome, d'être toujours à entrées multiples; le terrier en ce sens est un rhizome animal, et comporte parfois une nette distinction entre la ligne de fuite comme couloir de déplacement, et les strates de réserve ou d'habitation (cf. le rat musqué). Une carte a des entrées multiples, contrairement au calque qui revient toujours «au même». Une carte est affaire de performance, tandis que le calque renvoie toujours à une 'compétence' (*ibid.*, 20).

Thus, the map, the cartography always implies a dynamic relationship between the border and artistic practice. Art does not work as a copy, an imitation or a representation. It is a device, a machine (or a machinery) that produces a constant dialogue with the structure it fights or combats. And the paths that this dialogue follows end up becoming the cartography itself. Artistic resistance is not a question of retention, but a question of perseverance and permanence in the map. Artistic practice is the development of a continuous and quotidian process of producing the cartography.

This material relationship between artistic practices (that necessarily involve the constant presence of the body) and border structures in Palestine and Western Sahara can also be understood

through the concept of *poetic materialism*. In one of the sections of number 21 – 22 of the magazine *Salamandra*, the Grupo Surrealista de Madrid reflects on this concept. Poetic materialism implies that poetry is a practice that does not only take place on a paper or on a book, just in the same way that painting does not only relate to the canvas. Poetic materialism is a mode of relation with the world, it is a methodology that includes presence, material and non-mediated relationship with reality as some of its main requirements. Poetic materialism implies “la poesía entendida como práctica: *la poesía por todos los medios*” (Monteverde 2015, 285). Therefore, poetic materialism also implies the non-representative character of artistic practices. Art occurs, happens, develops *in* the world, *in* the border. It is a “práctica de una creación no representativa sino experimentada” (*ibid.*, 286).

The non-mediated character of artistic practice understood as a form of poetic materialism is essential. “se trata de la experiencia vital ceñida a su propia presencia sin ninguna proyección, sin ninguna mediación” (*ibid.*). The process of transformation from the tool (border) to the object (wall), the process of decolonization of the border architectural structures, the process of deterritorialization does not happen once the artwork is finished, but while the artwork is being made. It is the presence of the body making the artwork what allows the border to be re-appropriated. Artistic practice, then, is not something that requires the wall as its material support (as if it was a piece of paper, a canvas or a stage). It intervenes in the border as the context to which it is materially linked in order to transform it. Poetic materialism is, then, closely related to life: “El materialismo poético aspira a ser sistemático, y a extenderse a todos los planos posibles, en busca de soluciones reales a los problemas de la vida” (*ibid.*, 287). However, as Monteverde argues, poetic materialism does not solve all the problems:

No obstante, somos conscientes de que el materialismo poético, por si mismo, exclusivamente, no está en condiciones de provocar un cambio lo suficientemente amplio y profundo. Sin embargo, estamos convencidos de que es un arma imprescindible, aquí y ahora, para promover un cambio con una bases lo suficientemente sólidas (*ibid.*, 287).

Thus, even if poetic materialism is not enough to provoke a transformation or a total decolonization/deterritorialization, it is a necessary part for the change to happen. Artistic practice helps in the process of drawing the line of flight, as Deleuze and Guattari would call it.

Two other goals that artistic practice/poetic materialism allow to be reached are:

- **Poetic justice:** Bureaucratic justice is intrinsically related to slow rhythms. Artistic practice makes it possible to develop a form of justice that is more immediate. This form of justice does not follow any reward or recompense, but the mere and simple act of intervention. Poetic justice is also immanent, not transcendental, and this implies that it constantly refers to itself and does not follow any other purpose but the existence of its own *being*. Poetic

justice, then, exists in itself, not for an external objective. Poetic justice is always achievable because the simple act of being making a poetic action (no matter how large, small, impressive or irrelevant it is) implies its existence.

- **The enlargement of political imagination:** As I already argued in “Palestina: ¿Es el Estado necesario? Posibilidades para ampliar los límites de la imaginación política” (2018), artistic practice makes it possible to think about political *solutions* to the conflicts of Palestine and Western Sahara without worrying about the limits that *realism* imposes. Larissa Sansour, for example, examines/materializes in some of her artworks the possibilities of a non-state solution to Palestine by ridiculing the state-based debates about the question of Palestine. Art allows her to aesthetically develop the idea that, maybe, a state is not the only available option for Palestinians. Thus, art makes it possible to mention the unmentionable in mainstream political contexts (assemblies, political parties, conferences...). This way, artistic practice works as a tool for imagining/producing realities –the question would be: are these realities only possible as artworks?–.

Because of the immanent, material and non-mediated relationship with the world that poetic materialism allows, the difference between two modes of doing (*poiesis* and *praxis*) disappears. As it has been explained at the beginning of this chapter, Espada and Ramalho Santos focused on the concept of *poiesis* in order to stress and highlight the importance of the ability of poetry to build realities. However, as Montverde reminds us, *poiesis* specifically refers to the mode of doing related to the arts. Poetic materialism, though, makes it possible to achieve a synthesis between *praxis*, understood as the mode of doing that is related to the transformation of the world (action) and *poiesis* (production). Consequently, poetic intervention implies action: the making of an artwork implies the transformation of the environment where the artwork is being made:

La *poiesis* y la *praxis*. Las dos son modos de hacer propios del ser humano. Pero no son lo mismo. La *poiesis* es creación (de un poema, un cuadro), y la *praxis* es acción (una revolución, por ejemplo). Las dos son imprescindibles, y lo que cada cual atesora de más propio es justamente la principal carencia de la otra. Ninguna de las dos puede llenar una vida sin crear a su alrededor un espacio de angustia, una carencia fundamental que si bien puede ser silenciada con silogismos más o menos convincentes, no por ello deja [de] mostrarse invariablemente, en los momentos determinantes, como una verdadera tragedia. Esta separación (que tanto recuerda a la de la vigilia y el sueño) es evidentemente artificial, y si bien en sus puntos extremos cada noción está perfectamente diferenciada de la otra, esto no quiere decir que no exista una comunicación lo suficientemente amplia y profunda que permita llegar a un tercer extremo, el de la radicalidad de su síntesis (Monteverde 2015, 285).

The distinction between *tool* and *object* and its relationship to the two modes of doing (*poiesis* and *praxis*) has also been analyzed by Giorgio Agamben in his book *L'uso dei corpi* (2014). Following Agamben's analysis, the tool is related to a process of production and the object, to a

process of practice (improductive). A poem, or any other work of art, could be defined as the result of a process of production. Thus, it would be a *tool*. However, looking at the artwork as a closed product (an institution, a museified entity) instead of a moment in a process of artistic practice (related to Souriau's concept of trajectory) would imply the negation of the dynamic interaction between many bodies and their world because it would cancel the possibility of art to be defined as a mode-of-being in the world (an activity the body performs). The radical synthesis poiesis+practice that Monteverde suggests allows us to understand the character of multiple artistic interventions that take place outside artistic institutions (in the streets, on walls, on the floor), and that are necessary in order to explain the way how artistic practice works in borderscapes. This synthesis allows to understand art as an improductive activity (a practice, a *praxis*) that produces something (*poiesis*) while (not after) performing its own existence. Thus, the result of its production is its own improductive mode-of-being in the world *hic et nunc*. Artistic practice produces an improductive and immanent object/tool. We can address the concept of *gesture* developed by Giorgio Agamben in “Note sul gesto”, contained in *Mezzi senza fine. Note sulla politica* (1996), to name this radical synthesis made of poiesis+practice. Agamben argues that “ciò che caratterizza il gesto è che, in esso, non si produce né si agisce, ma si assume e sopporta” (Agamben 1996, 51). The gesture is neither a goal nor a medium, but both of them at the same time. The goal of the gesture is to keep on producing its own existence as a medium:

Per la comprensione del gesto, nulla è, perciò, più fuorviante che rappresentarsi una sfera dei mezzi rivolti a uno scopo (per esempio, la marcia, come mezzo per spostare il corpo dal punto A al punto B) e poi, distinta da questa e ad essa superiore, una sfera del gesto come movimento che ha in se stesso il suo fine (per esempio, la danza come dimensione estetica). Una finalità senza mezzi è altrettanto estraniante di una medialità che ha senso solo rispetto a un fine. Se la danza è gesto, è perché essa non è invece altro che la sopportazione e l'esibizione del carattere mediale dei movimenti corporei. *Il gesto e l'esibizione di una medialità, il render visibile un mezzo come tale* (*ibid.*, 51 – 52).

The gesture is “comunicazione di una comunicabilità” (*ibid.*, 52), communication of communicability. Artistic practices understood as gestures, then, carry with them the ability to develop a perpetual poetic dialogue with the world.

Finally, it has to be mentioned that, as Monteverde already said, poetical actions and the arts are not the unique means that will produce the change of material conditions in borderscapes. Artistic practice is but a means to contribute to possible sociopolitical transformations. The problem is that, as Antonio Ramírez argues in the chapter “Límites de lo Poético”, included in *Situación de la poesía (por otros medios) a la luz del surrealismo* (2006), the transformations that artistic practice allows sometimes imply the creation of temporal liberated guettos, in which something appears to have been transformed. “Es por ello que, en el caso de que logremos adentrarnos en lo poético, no podremos evitar el experimentarlo como la muestra de una realidad provisionalmente liberada

donde todo parece tener otra significación, pero fatalmente temporal” (Ramírez 2006, 98).

It has been proved, then, through these lines that the poetic is not exclusive of language. The poetic can belong to any manifestation of life, since it refers to a relationship not to an object. There is no a poetic object, but a poetic relationship between objects. A poem, then, should not be understood as a poetic *thing*, but a poetic relationship between words. Mohammed Abdul Hussein Yousif in his article "التعاليق الاستعارية في النحت المعاصر" –“Metaphorical correlation in the contemporary sculpture”– (2018) argues that the metaphor is not only a linguistic process (Abdul Hussein Yousif 2018, 23). He maintains that it is also present in other artistic practices, such as sculpture. However, he still argues that the metaphor is related to semantics. As it has already been explained in chapter 1, the aim of this PhD Thesis is to move from the being to the doing, from representation to performativity. However, since it has also been argued that the poetic is present in daily life and daily artistic practices and since the metaphor is one of the most common mechanisms of poetry, one could ask –by always keeping in mind the performative character of artistic practices–: is it possible to produce a performative metaphor? Is it possible to produce a metaphor that is not related to semantics, meaning and interpretation? Is it possible to produce a metaphor that is related to the doing? What type of metaphor would it be? Since, metaphors are semantic mechanisms, can they be performative mechanisms as well?

Emily Jacir, for example, in her performance *Where we come from*⁹ achieves this goal: she develops a performative metaphor. Her body is replacing the body of those exiled Palestinians that cannot move freely in Palestine. She uses her US passport with the aim of performing and fulfilling the wishes of those Palestinians. Thus, she embodies both a message and an action, and also an identity (a meaning). She becomes *the other* and performs an action that does not belong to her, but to the body that she represents. Jacir's body develops a performative and metaphorical process.

Maybe, it is impossible to separate the metaphor from semantics. However, it is possible to affirm its performative character as well. The metaphor is a semantic mechanism, but it can also develop as a performative process at the same time. The metaphor allows us to affirm the performative character that the poetic embodies when looking at artistic practices on borders without forgetting that artistic practices always imply any level of representation. Thus, if Monteverde suggested that there is a radical synthesis that allows the existence of poiesis+praxis, I suggest that the metaphor could allow a radical synthesis of performativity+representation. The metaphor, from this point of view, can be described as a poetic mechanism based on:

- Representation: it implies that *something* is representing or replacing another *thing* and that there is any level of semantic correspondence between these two *things* that allows this representation or replacement –the metaphor– to happen.

⁹ Described in chapter 4.

- Performativity: it implies that the replacement of one *thing* by the other *thing* does not only causes a new semantic product –a new relationship between two *things* based on meaning–, but that it also produces a new action, a new *doing*. The metaphor itself is the action –the doing– that is being produced.

3. TOWARDS AN ETHICS OF ARCHITECTURE

Thinking about the structure of frontier architectures is one of the ways to reflect on the limits of architecture because it allows us to talk about violence. Bernard Tschumi already argued that there is no architecture without violence. However, frontier architecture, as well as the architectural structure of other buildings such as jails, are specially violent. One could say that there are not merely violent but that they are designed to perform violence. Violence is part of the plan. Indeed, the second main idea developed by Tschumi is that there is no architecture without program. Taking into account these two main *facts* (there is no architecture without violence and there is no architecture without program) the question is: is it possible to develop an ethics of architecture? Is it possible to develop a series of agreements for good practices? Is it possible for architecture not to be violent?

Consejo Nocturno in their book *Un habitar más fuerte que la metrópoli* (2018) argued that what is necessary is to produce a change in the way bodies are related to space. From the paradigm of governing to the paradigm of inhabiting space. The paradigm of governing space is the one related to the neoliberal and colonial metropolis. The metropolitan subjectivity and mode-of-being has been spread all over the world and it has become an empire that works both structurally (it shapes the world) and biopolitically (it shapes the way we are and, therefore, the way we relate to the world). The *metrópoli global integrada* is a biopolitical form of colonialism the aim of which is to homogenize the world, to universalize Capitalism and the State as the only possible institutions to govern the world.

La metrópoli y los estilos de vida que excreta y fagocita pueden ser vistos como un lento deslizamiento de la especie hacia una autorregulación sincronizada de sus cuerpos, hacia una atenuación de sus formas-de-vida hasta volverlas completamente compatibles con la eficacia y la productividad capitalistas, como una demostración de que la dominación puede obrar sin necesidad de dominadores (Consejo Nocturno 2018, 19).

The metropolis becomes, then, a “total institution” (*ibid.*, 53) This means that no matter where (anywhere), there is always “algo de metrópoli” (*ibid.*, 38).

A paradigm of inhabiting space would produce a transformation of the perspective from where to exist. It implies a more intense relationship to the space, the landscape, the territory. Thus, it implies the development of existential ties to each place.

Although Consejo Nocturno primarily focuses on the concept of the metropolis as a colonial machinery that works through economy, it also works through politics. Architecture of occupation and annexation can also be described as biopolitical artifacts, as “dispositivos de control sobre todos los momentos de la vida cotidiana” (*ibid.*, 20) that implies the “*puesta en gobernanza constante*” of daily life (*ibid.*). Architecture, then, becomes a strategy for governance. From this point of view, architecture is not a political thing, but a means to do politics, it is a method, a strategy for political management as Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson argue in *Border as method, or, the multiplication of labor* (2013).

The ethics of the metropolis and its paradigm of governing implies “una condición generalizada de *extranjería*, que nos prohíbe seguir usando la palabra 'habitante' para referirnos a sus inquilinos” (Consejo Nocturno 2018, 48). In Palestine and Western Sahara there are but refugees, exiled, dispossessed bodies, just in the same way one cannot be but a tourist in the capitalist centers of the world. In these capitalist centers, “con el mundo alienado en Museo se completa la destrucción de todo uso posible” (*ibid.*, 50), whereas in the peripheral areas such as Palestine or Western Sahara the world alienated in borders implies the destruction of any possible use of space. The fusion of these two alienations becomes obvious in certain contexts. Militant tourism is a fact. It exists. I have seen people taking selfies in front of the Moroccan wall in Western Sahara. The Border became a Museum. “Cada fotografía tomada por un turista refuerza así su imposibilidad de uso del mundo, de experimentarlo, de habitarlo; es un modo de denegación permanente de lo que está ahí y de que *él está ahí*” (*ibid.*, 51). The metropolis is always taking place everywhere, anywhere.

These borders –that are one of the architectural materializations of the metropolis and that are not the result of a negotiation between different actors, but the result of unilateral decisions– entail that “la guerra asimétrica se radicaliza para volverse unilateral” (*ibid.*, 62). Those that own the means to build frontier architectural structures impose a unilateral violence that develops in the process of management of space. The metropolis imposes the checkpoint not only as a physical structure to control bodies' movements, but also as a metaphor and as a strategy: “el *checkpoint* o el retén, tal es el paradigma por excelencia de la sociedad de control” (*ibid.*, 66).

In order to abandon the metropolitan matrix of power, it is not enough to choose a position from where to fight: there has to be a strategy/practice of inhabiting. “Habitar es devenir ingobernable, es fuerza de vinculación y tejimiento de relaciones autónomas” (*ibid.*, 88). Therefore, there is not such a thing as a metropolitan insurrection, but an insurrection against the metropolis (*ibid.*, 91). This does not mean that the insurrection has to be placed outside the metropolis or that it has to come from outside. There is not outside. The metropolis is everywhere and the embodiment of its devices and subjectivity is what allows each body to become insurrectional. The insurrection comes from inside the metropolis and fights it at the same time. Indeed, *that* insurrection consists of inhabiting

intensely, developing an “arte geográfico llamado habitar” (*ibid.*, 111).

Developing artistic practices in/on/through/etc borders, then, implies a process of inhabiting. To produce any change on the border is to inhabit it and to produce it in a non-normative way. To intervene the wall is to produce the wall in a certain way, but to produce it differently. Any intervention on the wall becomes, then, architecture. However, the examples that we have been discussing in this PhD Thesis would consist of a very specific type of architecture: a vernacular architecture, a non-architecture “Retomando los materiales más próximos y siendo una región continua de intensidades, una construcción vernácula es una modificación viviente, una prolongación en forma del entorno, no su refrenamiento o dominación, un iglú no es más que la continuación por otros medios del viento glacial, pero vuelto habitable” (*ibid.*, 106).

If artistic practices that are developed in borderscapes become a type of architecture that produce the wall differently, then, the body that develops these practices becomes an architect of the wall. The insurrection is to inhabit the wall so intensively that one becomes somehow the wall itself. To become the wall through artistic practice is a way of inhabiting space and make it become walkable (and this is the answer to the question that was asked at the beginning of chapter 4). There is no resistance, but re-existence. The destruction of the wall is the production –do not confuse with *construction*– of a wall, but a different one. A wall that cannot be called a wall.

Maybe the question about an ethics of architecture has been answered by referring to this type of architecture, this vernacular architecture.

Or maybe not.

Maybe the question remains a question, because it is not a *question*, but a *problem* –following what has already been said at the introduction of this PhD Thesis–.

“*Habitante es aquel que hace uso de un territorio*” (*ibid.*, 112).

PART 4: THE END

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

“Así pues, el juego del que hablamos es un hilo de luz
bajo la puerta cerrada de lo de siempre”

Julián Lacalle and Julio Monteverde¹

Space, as Lefebvre argued in *The Production of Space* (1991), far from being a category that must be only studied from physics or mathematics is, essentially, a category that is open to the world and to the multiplicity of knowledges that exist. It is impossible to study space without addressing its social dimension, for example –space is *social space*, in terms of Lefebvre–. Just in the same way that one cannot study space as *something* that has been there before anything else. Space is always being produced. This process of production is not due to the existence of certain subjects that voluntarily and consciously produce space, meaning that they make space exist as a consequence of their voluntary actions. The process of production of space is the result of a continuous mutation, transformation and restatement of space that arises from the relationships that develop within the multiplicity, between the *objects* that are there, in the world.

There is no way of existing other than *existing intraworlds*, as Giorgio Agamben argues in the fourth chapter of *L'uso dei corpi. Homo Sacer, IV, 2* (2014), entitled “L'uso del mondo.” Agamben, based on Heidegger's ideas, says that the using of the world consists of relating oneself to what one can reach with the hand. Those things that are in the world and the relationships between them are the elements that produce space, they *are* space, they are being produced by themselves, they *are* a continuous process of production. Or, as Lefebvre would also argue, space is both an historical product –that is the result of a continuous process of producing space developed historically– and the process of production –that is taking place *now*, and *now*, and *now...*–. Thus, space is both a product and a production, “production process and product present themselves as two inseparable aspects, not as two separable ideas” (Lefebvre 1991, 37). This means that space should not be understood as a container of things, but as the *thing* in itself. Space is what is (t)here.

In bordered landscapes as the ones that have been here studied, the world that one can reach with the hand, the world that is *there* is the frontier itself. The available world is the border and all its devices (that can be architectural, bureaucratic, political, rhetorical, etc). The process of producing space in these contexts can be described as a process of *borderization*.

What is then architecture? Architecture, as a discipline that designs specific places, directly participates in the production of space. Architecture has been addressed in this PhD Thesis from two

¹ Lacalle, Julián y Julio Monteverde. 2018. *Invitación al tiempo explosivo*. Ciudad de México: Sexto Piso.

different perspectives: as a discipline that designs specific places, and also as a discipline that designs points of view. When one analyzes the structure and dynamics of the wall in Palestine through the reflections made by the architect Eyal Weizman, for example, one is but using architecture to analyze what architecture has built. This means that architecture makes it possible to build the wall and also to develop an analysis of the wall.

Through the reflections of other architects, I have also developed the question of the performativity of space. Space, some elements of which have been designed by architecture, *does* things. It is not a static entity. Space (a building, a room, a table placed in the middle of the living-room) takes part in life, produces situations, alters trajectories, choreographs movements, distributes bodies. Space, as Bernard Tschumi or Doritah Hannah highlight, is an event, something that happens. Thus, from this perspective, space is not the place where events happen anymore. Instead, it becomes the event that happens.

Because of the continuous participation of architecture in life and the interruption of space that it causes, architecture becomes violent by definition. Tschumi already said it: there is no architecture without violence. It is impossible to think about architecture without violence. In the border structures of Palestine and Western Sahara, the intrinsic violence of architecture is intensified since both border structures have been specifically designed to produce damage on bodies.

If violence had been characterized in the previous paragraph as an inevitable question caused by the continuous intersection between space and life, violence is intensified by border architecture because of the continuous intersection between damage, harm and life. Violence in the two contexts analyzed (Palestine and Western Sahara) becomes physical pain. Hurt. Scar. Wound. Frustration. Impotence.

The border in Palestine and Western Sahara is not a line that separates them from Israel and Morocco respectively. The border is not the boundary, but the area that spreads over space, the volume that spreads through space, the atmosphere that impregnates the space. How can one say that the border ends? The border is embodied by the exiled bodies, by refugees and the displaced as well. This is not an attempt to poeticize the border by saying that it symbolically inhabits the bodies of the Palestinians and the Sahrawis in order to produce a pitiful and sappy effect. No: what I try to do is to say that the border actually happens in these bodies. It has been embodied. It is a biopolitical artifact that *is constantly being inscribed in*, instead of *happening outside* the body. The border happens through bureaucracy, through documents, through institutions, through daily life, through the material conditions that are the consequence of the existence of certain structures such as walls or fences or checkpoints. It does not matter whether these structures are placed hundreds of kilometers away, as it happens in the Sahrawi case (the wall is placed far away from any Sahrawi

settlement in the Liberated Area or any refugee camp), or very close (as the Israeli wall, that has been built within Palestinian cities and villages). The border becomes a landscape, and a landscape is the result of the articulation of the different elements that take part in the border-machine: discourses, social practices, objects, architecture, laws, interventions, insurrections, control policies, etc.

Taking the landscape of the border, that Gloria E. Anzaldúa would call *borderlands*, as its starting point, this PhD Thesis has focused on the analysis of one of its elements: the artistic practice that happens *there*. I call artistic practice to the group of actions that take art as one of its components, as its engine or as its tool. Artistic practice can also take art as its excuse. This is not the relevant thing. The difference between art, life and political contestation in these contexts –as it happens in many others– is vague. Through the chapters of this PhD Thesis, diverse objects, festivals and institutions as well as artworks made by different people that identify themselves as artists and are internationally recognized as artists have been analyzed. However, I also wanted to address anonymous artistic practices, those that are accompanied by no signature and the result of which resembles more a game than an artwork. The artistic practices that are developed or happen in/on border spaces produce a series of processes that are aimed to the dismantling of the border. These processes, such as the process of deterritorialization, decolonization or re-appropriation, are possible because there is a change in the nature of the architectural structure in itself. The different material elements that take part of the border are tools that follow specific purposes. They are objects that become tools aimed to accomplish an objective: they are transcendental. The border in Palestine and Western Sahara separates, repels, materializes colonial objectives, makes it possible to control bodies and to annex territories, etc. However, artistic practice, as an intervention in the border (or in any place surrounding the border, since the border is an area, a landscape, a vast territory) makes the instrument –the tool– become an object again; or, as Agamben would say, the arts make the border become *inoperosa* [inoperative] (Agamben 2014, 313). When anyone draws a graffiti on the wall, for example, the border disappears as a border (if not completely, at least partially). The object arises from the instrument: the object without any purpose, available, free. Crying *immanence*.

This process of coming back to the object implies a process of decolonization and deterritorialization. The transformation from the instrument (the tool) is the line of flight that allows a process of desertion and removal of the border. It is a movement towards the outside. Of course, artistic practice does not produce an irreversible process of decolonization and deterritorialization. The object becomes an instrument again as soon as its repressive elements perform their function: checkpoints, defensive units... Because of this, the relationship between border architecture and artistic practice is always rhizomatic, it is a constant dialogue, a tension that allows the process of

territorialization and deterritorialization to happen one after the other (or viceversa).

I argue that the relationship between the border and artistic practices is rhizomatic (and not dialectical, for example) because it implies no hierarchy. Of course, there is an imbalance of power between the border apparatus and the vulnerable bodies that develop artistic practices. However, any form of artistic practice is analyzed in this PhD Thesis as a case of re-appropriation: the wall is re-appropriated by people (that identifies not only a group of subjects, individuals, persons). It does not matter whether artistic practice consists of drawing a simple line with white chalk in a hidden corner: something has happened and the border was not built for *that* to happen. That line is out of place. The cases that have been analyzed during this research have been chosen as examples that illustrate the way this rhizomatic relationship between artistic practices and border architecture works. The artworks have not been analyzed as objects or practices that represent something, that send any message, that say something; they have not been analyzed as intermediaries, but as objects that *do* things. From this perspective, one can conclude that artistic practices are not always aimed to do something specific, but to suggest a specific way of inhabiting. If the border is an area-volume-atmosphere, then, it can be understood as a place that can be inhabited. And a way to inhabit it is to develop artistic practices.

Besides being rhizomatic, the relationship between artistic practices and border spaces can also be characterized as an example of poetic materialism. The poetic function arises as a result of the material intimacy, of the material distance, of the material contact between the bodies that develop artistic practices and the architectural structures. Poetic materialism makes the difference between two categories traditionally linked to the verb to *do* blur. These two categories are *poiesis* and *praxis*. *Poiesis* is the *doing* linked to production, whereas *praxis* is the *doing* linked to action. These two categories are mixed together thanks to the specific mode of interaction allowed by poetic materialism. Artistic practice (the result of which is an artwork) and political practice (the result of which is an action, an intervention, a riot) become indistinguishable one from the other. The arts interrupt the life that had been previously interrupted by the border. The arts interrupt the border. They interrupt the interruption. This artistic interruption is characterized by the fusion of *poiesis* and *praxis*.

It is necessary to refer to what was argued at the end of chapter 6: besides allowing for a decolonized and deterritorialized mode of inhabiting, artistic practice in Palestine and Western Sahara also allow for poetic justice and the enlargement of political imagination. Justice is slow. Artistic practice makes it possible to reach poetic justice here and now. This poetic justice must not be understood as a type of revenge. Poetic justice implies that one can reach a type of justice simply because one exists (or re-exists). It implies being noisy because one exists. On the other hand, the enlargement of the political imagination is possible because the arts (specially those that have not

become monuments or have not been placed in museums or theme parks yet) allow to talk about realities that are unmentionable in normative political institutions. Artistic practice makes what is hidden become imaginable, allowing for an enlargement of what is possible.

Artistic practices contribute to the building process of the wall, but following a different path. Any action on the structure of the wall is but a mere gesture (but contrary to the normative gestures that are performed to create the wall that repels, expels, occupies, annexes) that is also building the wall. Thus, artistic practices become also architectural. As Lefebvre argued:

Organized gestures, which is to say ritualized and codified gestures, are not simply performed in 'physical' space, in the space of bodies. Bodies themselves generate spaces, which are produced by and for their gestures. The linking of gestures corresponds to the articulation and linking of well-defined spatial segments, segments which repeat, but whose repetition gives rise to novelty (Lefebvre 1991, 216).

Artistic practice can also be understood as a set of ritualized gestures, a set of gestures that are repeated –the action of *painting*, for example, is determined by the repetition of certain gestures– and that generates a space, they are architectural. However, the architecture developed through artistic practices is a type of architecture that Consejo Nocturno would call vernacular. An architecture that is the result of an intense mode of inhabiting² the territory, it is an immanent riot, it is a daily insurrection. The difference between an architecture of occupation and a vernacular architecture takes us to the question of the possibility of an ethics of architecture. Border architecture is the perfect materialization of the argument of Bernard Tschumi, who maintains that architecture is intrinsically violent. However, there is also a type of architecture (vernacular architecture) that is the result of the materialization of the process of inhabiting a territory³.

However, artistic practice can also become an ally of occupation, violence and power. The fact that this PhD Thesis has focused on the re-appropriating role of artistic practices does not deny other possible roles that art can play. One of the processes that artistic practices can produce is the process of monumentalization. As Lefebvre put it: “To the degree that there are traces of violence and death, negativity and aggressiveness in social practice, the monumental work erases them and replaces them with a tranquil power and certitude which can encompass violence and terror” (Lefebvre 1991, 222). The arts can deactivate re-appropriation and can make the wall –in this specific case that I am studying– become a monument, meaning a space that does not embody any tension anymore and that silences any other possibility of existing.

Finally, it is necessary to highlight the importance of looking at artistic practices and political

2 The translation into Spanish of Lefebvre's book *La production de l'espace* (published by Capitán Swing, 2013) contains a distinction between the words *habitat* and *inhabiting*. The *habitat* would be related to the program, to the functions designed for a certain space (the border, for example), whereas *inhabiting* would bring life back to space and allow for different functions to develop.

3 This PhD Thesis has addressed artistic practices as strategies for decolonization. However, artistic practices can also be used for the normalization of the wall-border (make the wall become beautiful, for example). Thus, *artistic practice* is not a synonym for *political resistance* necessarily.

practices developed in places that do not belong to the euro-white and western context. Looking at these realities is important in order not to reproduce stereotypes related to what *we* understand when we say *politics* or Arab-Muslim *world*. It seems as if these *objects* can only be studied by using very specific tools of analysis, which contributes to the myth that there is something intrinsically problematic with regard to these topics.

CAPÍTULO 7: CONCLUSIONES

El espacio, tal y como apuntaba Lefebvre, lejos de ser una categoría que deba ser estudiada únicamente desde la física o las matemáticas es, en esencia, una categoría abierta al mundo y a la multiplicidad de saberes –el espacio es espacio social, en palabras de Lefebvre–. No se puede estudiar el espacio sin su dimensión social, por ejemplo. De igual modo que no se puede estudiar el espacio solo como un algo ya dado de antemano. El espacio está en constante producción. No porque haya sujetos que consciente y voluntariamente lo producen. Es decir, que le otorgan el don de existir mediante el fruto de sus acciones voluntarias, sino porque el espacio está sometido a un continuo proceso de mutación, transformación y actualización que surge de la relación entre la multiplicidad. Entre los objetos que están ahí. Entre las cosas del mundo.

No hay modo de existir que difiera de existir intramundos, como Giorgio Agamben defiende en el cuarto capítulo de *L'uso dei corpi. Homo Sacer, IV, 2* (2014), titulado “L'uso del mondo”. Agamben, basado en las ideas de Heidegger, establece que usar el mundo consiste en relacionarse con aquello que está al alcance de la mano. Estas cosas que están en el mundo y las relaciones entre ellas son los elementos que producen el espacio, ellas son el espacio, se producen a sí mismas, son un continuo proceso de producción. O, como Lefebvre diría, el espacio es a la vez un producto histórico –resultado de un continuo proceso de producción desarrollado históricamente– y un proceso de producción –que está teniendo lugar *ahora y ahora y ahora...*–. Así, el espacio es a la vez producto y producción, “production process and product present themselves as two inseparable aspects, not as two separable ideas” (Lefebvre 1991, 37). Por lo tanto, no se trata tampoco de entender el espacio como un receptáculo o contenedor de cosas, sino como la cosa en sí misma. El espacio es lo que hay.

En paisajes fronterizados como los que han sido estudiados aquí, el mundo que está al alcance de la mano es la propia frontera. El mundo disponible es la frontera y todos los dispositivos que la conforman (arquitectónicos, burocráticos, políticos, retóricos, etc). El proceso de producción del espacio en estos contextos puede ser descrito como un proceso de borderización.

¿Qué es entonces la arquitectura? La arquitectura, como disciplina que diseña lugares específicos, interviene de lleno en la producción del espacio. La arquitectura, a lo largo de esta tesis se ha abordado de dos maneras diferentes: tanto como la disciplina que diseña lugares, como la disciplina que genera miradas. Cuando se analiza la estructura y dinámicas del muro de Palestina a través de las reflexiones del arquitecto Eyal Weizman, por ejemplo, no se hace otra cosa que emplear la arquitectura para mirar lo que la arquitectura, a su vez, ha construido. Es decir, arquitectura es tanto el motor que hace posible el muro como el motor que hace posible su interpretación y su crítica.

A través de reflexiones de otros arquitectos y arquitectas también se ha abordado la cuestión de la performatividad del espacio. El espacio, parte del cual queda diseñado desde la arquitectura, hace cosas. No se trata de una realidad estática. El espacio (un edificio, una habitación, una mesa dispuesta en medio de un salón) intervienen en la vida, producen situaciones, alteran trayectorias, coreografizan movimientos, distribuyen los cuerpos. El espacio, como subrayan Bernard Tschumi o Doritah Hannah es un evento, algo que sucede. Desde esta perspectiva, pues, el espacio deja de ser el lugar en el que suceden los eventos para pasar a ser el evento que sucede.

Dada la inevitable intervención del espacio en la vida, dada la interrupción contante del espacio en la existencia, la arquitectura deviene, por definición, violenta. Ya lo apunta Tschumi, no hay arquitectura sin violencia. Imposible pensar una arquitectura sin violencia. En el caso de las estructuras arquitectónicas que conforman los espacios fronterizos de Palestina y Sáhara Occidental esta violencia, que ya es intrínseca a cualquier forma de arquitectura, queda intensificada, pues produce daño.

Si la violencia arquitectónica había quedado caracterizada en el párrafo anterior como una cuestión inevitable dada la intersección continua de espacio y vida, en el caso de la arquitectura de frontera, esta violencia se intensifica dada la intersección inevitable entre el daño y el dolor producidos por la arquitectura y la vida. La violencia, en estos dos contextos planteados (el muro Israelí en Palestina y el muro Marroquí en Sáhara Occidental) deviene daño físico. Dolor. Cicatriz. Herida. Frustración. Impotencia.

La frontera en Palestina y en Sáhara Occidental no es la línea que demarca su separación con Israel y Marruecos respectivamente. La frontera no es la linde, sino que es el área que se extiende, el volumen que se atraviesa, la atmósfera que impregna. ¿En qué medida se puede afirmar que la frontera acaba? La frontera se materializa en la propia existencia de cuerpos exiliados, refugiados, desplazados. No se trata de poetizar o metaforizar la frontera inscribiéndola simbólicamente en los cuerpos de la población palestina y saharauí para producir una especie de efectismo lastimero o sentimentaloides. No: se trata de afirmar con toda la rotundidad posible que, efectivamente, la frontera habita en esos cuerpos. Está incorporada, encarnada (*embodied*). Es un artefacto biopolítico que se inscribe en, no que sucede fuera de el cuerpo. La frontera se inscribe en la burocracia, en los documentos, en la administración, en la vida cotidiana y en las condiciones materiales que son consecuencia de la existencia de una estructura específica: una valla, un muro, una alambrada. No importa mucho que estas estructuras se encuentren a cientos de kilómetros, como en el caso de Sáhara Occidental (el muro se encuentra a gran distancia de las poblaciones de la zona liberada así como de los campos de refugiados/as) o a pocos metros (como es el caso del muro israelí contruido dentro —o, mejor, entre medias— de las ciudades palestinas). La frontera se convierte en un paisaje, entendido este como la articulación de la maquinaria fronteriza: los discursos, las prácticas sociales,

los elementos, la arquitectura, las legislaciones, las intervenciones, las insurrecciones, el control, etc.

Como parte de ese paisaje fronterizo, que Gloria E. Anzaldúa denominaría *borderland*, esta tesis se ha centrado en el análisis de uno de sus elementos: la práctica artística. La práctica artística es el conjunto de acciones que parten o usan lo artístico (sea lo que sea eso) como su motor o herramienta. Puede que, incluso, solo como su excusa. Eso no es lo relevante. La diferenciación entre arte, vida y formas de acción política en estos contextos -y en muchos otros- es difusa. A lo largo de los capítulos de esta tesis se han abordado las obras de diferentes personas, identificadas ellas mismas como artistas y reconocidas internacionalmente como tales. Sin embargo, también se ha querido explorar la práctica artística anónima, esa que no lleva rúbrica y que se parece más al juego, a lo lúdico. Las prácticas artísticas que son realizadas o que ocurren en espacios de frontera generan una serie de procesos tendentes a la desarticulación de la frontera como tal. Estos procesos, entre los cuales pueden destacarse la desterritorialización, la descolonización o la re-apropiación, son posibles porque se produce una transformación en la propia naturaleza de la estructura arquitectónica. Los diferentes elementos materiales que conforman la frontera son instrumentos, entendidos como elementos que sirven a propósitos específicos. Como cosas instrumentalizadas, tendentes a un fin: trascendentales. Es propio de la frontera en Palestina y Sáhara Occidental separar, repeler, servir a objetivos coloniales, favorecer el control de los cuerpos, facilitar la anexión de tierras, etc. Sin embargo, la práctica artística, como intervención en la frontera (o en las zonas aledañas a esta, es decir, en cualquier parte de la frontera entendida como área, paisaje, lugar extenso), devuelve el instrumento a su dimensión más insulsa: transforma el instrumento en objeto; o, como diría Agamben, las artes hacen que la frontera se vuelva *inoperosa* [inoperativa] (Agamben 2014, 313). Cuando se realiza una pintada sobre el muro de Palestina, por ejemplo, el carácter instrumental de la frontera, si bien no queda totalmente borrado, al menos se difumina y queda difuso. El objeto aparece. El objeto sin finalidad, disponible, dispuesto. Vociferando inmanencia.

Es este retorno hacia el objeto el que implica el proceso de descolonización y desterritorialización. El propio proceso de transformación del instrumento en objeto es la línea de fuga que invita hacia la deserción, la destitución de la frontera. Hacia el afuera. Por supuesto, las prácticas artísticas no producen un proceso de descolonización o desterritorialización irreversibles. El objeto vuelve a ser instrumento tan pronto como se manifiesta la fuerza de sus mecanismos de represión: los checkpoints, la reacción de las unidades de defensa... Por ello, la relación siempre rizomática entre la frontera y las prácticas artísticas es un continuo diálogo, una tensión en la que los procesos de territorialización y desterritorialización se producen uno después del otro (o a la inversa).

Digo que la relación entre la frontera y las prácticas artísticas es rizomática (y no dialéctica, por

ejemplo), entre otras cosas, porque no se trata de una relación jerárquica. Por supuesto que existe un desequilibrio de fuerzas entre la contundencia del aparato (máquina) frontera y la vulnerabilidad de los cuerpos que desarrollan prácticas artísticas. Sin embargo, cualquier intervención en el paisaje fronterizo es analizado en esta tesis como una forma de re-apropiación: el muro es re-apropiado por la gente (ya no sujetos, ya no individuos, ya no personas). Da igual que la intervención artística sea minúscula, da igual que sea una mera línea trazada con una tiza en una esquina casi invisible: algo ha sucedido, la frontera no había sido construida para eso. Esa línea está fuera de lugar. Los casos que se han analizado en esta investigación han sido tomados como ejemplos de prácticas artísticas que hacen rizoma con la frontera. No han sido analizados en función de lo que intentan representar de su mensaje, de lo que dicen, de su rol como mediadores de otra cosa, sino en función de su hacer. Desde esta perspectiva se comprueba cómo las prácticas artísticas no intentan hacer algo específico, en muchas ocasiones, sino hacer un modo específico de habitar. Porque, si la frontera es un área-volumen-atmósfera, puede entenderse como un lugar en el que se habita. Y parte del habitar ese área es practicar intervenciones artísticas en el entorno.

Además de rizomática, la forma de relación entre prácticas artísticas y espacio fronterizo también se puede definir como una muestra de materialismo poético. La función poética acontece por cualquier medio como resultado de la intimidad material, de la distancia material, del contacto material de los cuerpos que practican artes en la frontera. El materialismo poético permite el desdibujamiento entre dos categorías que han servido tradicionalmente para nombrar el hacer: poiesis y praxis. Poiesis, como el hacer propio de las artes, y praxis, como el hacer propio de la acción, se entremezclan gracias al modo de interacción que el materialismo poético hace posible. La práctica de lo artístico (hacer una obra de arte) se enmaraña con la práctica política (la acción, la intervención, el motín). Las artes interrumpen la vida marcada por la interrupción causada por la frontera. Las artes interrumpen, así, la frontera. Interrumpen la interrupción. Esa interrupción artística está marcada por la fusión entre poiesis y práctica.

Queda también subrayar lo que se perfilaba al final del capítulo 6. A saber, que la práctica artística en los contextos de Palestina y Sáhara Occidental, además de hacer posible un habitar descolonizador y desterritorializador de la frontera, también hace posibles dos procesos más: el de facilitar una suerte de justicia poética y el de ampliar la imaginación política. Dada la frustración generalizada que los ritmos de la justicia imponen, la intervención artística permite alcanzar una cierta justicia poética aquí y ahora, que no debe ser confundida con una forma de venganza. La justicia poética supone alcanzar la recompensa del propio acto de existir (o re-existir) y generar ruido para hacer palpable esa existencia. Por otro lado, la ampliación de la imaginación política se da porque el ámbito de las artes, sobre todo de las artes no museizadas ni monumentalizadas ni parquematizadas, permiten nombrar lo que en espacios políticos instaurados como tales aparece

generalmente como innombrable. La práctica artística, pues, imagina no ya lo inimaginable (ello sería contradictorio), sino lo oculto, permitiendo, así, un ensanchamiento del espectro de lo posible.

Las prácticas artísticas como modos de intervención en el muro suponen una construcción del muro, pero de otro modo. Cualquier intervención sobre las estructuras arquitectónicas del muro no es más que un gesto (pero de otro signo diferente al normativo caracterizado por su repeler, expulsar, ocupar, anexionar) que contribuye a la producción del muro. Así, las prácticas artísticas se convierten en una suerte de arquitectura. Como Lefebvre defendió:

Organized gestures, which is to say ritualized and codified gestures, are not simply performed in 'physical' space, in the space of bodies. Bodies themselves generate spaces, which are produced by and for their gestures. The linking of gestures corresponds to the articulation and linking of well-defined spatial segments, segments which repeat, but whose repetition gives rise to novelty (Lefebvre 1991, 216).

La práctica artística puede ser entendida también como un conjunto de gestos ritualizados, un conjunto de gestos que se repite –*pintar*, por ejemplo, es una acción determinada por la repetición de una serie de gestos concretos– y genera un espacio, se vuelve arquitectónico. Pero se trata de una arquitectura que el Consejo Nocturno calificaría de vernácula. Una arquitectura que es fruto de un habitar intenso⁴ del lugar, que es revuelta inmanente, insurrección cotidiana. Esta diferenciación entre la arquitectura de ocupación y la arquitectura vernácula nos sitúa en la pregunta sobre la ética de la arquitectura. Frente a una arquitectura intrínsecamente violenta (como defiende Tschumi), que sería propia de la arquitectura fronteriza militarizada de contextos como el palestino o el saharauí, existe la posibilidad de una arquitectura vernácula que es la materialización del propio proceso de habitar⁵.

Sin embargo, la práctica artística también puede convertirse en una aliada de la ocupación, la violencia y el poder. El hecho de que esta tesis se centre en el rol de las prácticas artísticas como mecanismos de re-apropiación no niega que existan otros roles posibles que las artes pueden desempeñar. Uno de los procesos que las artes pueden producir es el proceso de monumentalización. Como dice Lefebvre: “To the degree that there are traces of violence and death, negativity and aggressiveness in social practice, the monumental work erases them and replaces them with a tranquil power and certitude which can encompass violence and terror” (Lefebvre 1991, 222). Las artes pueden desactivar la re-apropiación y pueden hacer que el muro –en este caso específico que estoy estudiando– se convierta en un monumento; es decir, en un espacio que no encarna ya ninguna tensión y que silencia cualquier otra posibilidad de existir.

4 La traducción al castellano del libro de Lefebvre *La production de l'espace* (publicado por Capitán Swing, 2013) incluye una distinción entre *habitat* y *habitar*. El *habitat* estaría relacionado con el programa, con las funciones diseñadas para determinado espacio (la frontera, por ejemplo), mientras que el *habitar* devolvería la vida al espacio y permitiría que nuevas funciones fueran desarrolladas.

5 Esta tesis se ha centrado en el análisis de prácticas artísticas como estrategias decoloniales. Sin embargo, las prácticas artísticas también pueden convertirse en estrategias para normalizar el muro-frontera (a través de un intento por embellecer el muro, por ejemplo). Esto quiere decir que *práctica artística* no es necesariamente un sinónimo de *resistencia política*.

Para finalizar, sería necesario también hacer énfasis en la importancia de prestar atención a las prácticas artísticas como prácticas políticas en contextos no eurobiancos y occidentales puesto que, si no, se cae en la reproducción de un estereotipo muy marcado tanto de lo que es la política y lo político, como de lo que es el mundo áraboislámico (en este caso concreto), que parece que solo puede ser analizado entendido o estudiado desde parámetros, instrumentos y disciplinas serios, lo que no contribuye más que a la idea de que algo problemático (más problemático de lo habitual) es intrínseco a estos contextos.

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